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PERSPECTIVES OF ŚAṄKARA

Editors

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN

SIBAJIBAN BHATTACHARYYA

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Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava

Commemoration Volume

PERSPECTIVES OF ŚAṄKARA

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PERSPECTIVES OF ŚAṄKARA

Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayanti Mahotsava Commemoration Volume

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EDITORS
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Department of Culture
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India

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PREFACE

A great philosopher and an eminent spiritual leader, an uncompromising traditionalist and a constructive revolutionary, an uncommon visionary and an extraordinary man of action, a daring intellectual and a spiritual humanist, Ādi Śaṅkara has been respected as a world-teacher (*jagadguru*) and a benefactor of mankind (*lokaśaṅkara*).

As a philosopher, Śaṅkara expounded and justified a version of absolute idealism, well-known as non-dualism (*advaita*), for which there is no parallel anywhere in the philosophical thinking of the world. His absolutism, it should be borne in mind, is transtheistic and not anti-theistic.

Śaṅkara as a spiritual leader was able to show, on the basis of the distinction between *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa* perspectives of the reality, the validity and significance of the different modes of worship of one and the same Godhead which is really devoid of both name and form, and thereby paved the way for religious harmony not only among the different sects of Hinduism, but also among the different religions of the world.

As a traditionalist, Śaṅkara upheld the authority of scripture-more particularly that of *śruti*, examined every philosophical position through the touchstone of scriptural authority, and rejected, without any compromise, views which were opposed to *śruti*.

Śaṅkara had the courage to reinterpret the text and reformulate the practice claiming at the same time that he was following the well-established tradition (*satsampradāya*). His steadfast adherence to the scriptural tradition did not prevent him from challenging orthodoxy and orthopraxis, more particularly those of the Mīmāṁsakas, which were embedded in ritualism on three grounds — first on the basis of the hermeneutics of the scriptural texts, secondly on the basis of the metaphysics of non-dualism, and thirdly on the basis of the axiology of *śreyas-preyas* (good-pleasant) dichotomy in which the good rather than the pleasant is the ultimate value. One has to carefully examine Śaṅkara's role as a social revolutionary in the context of his concept of *adhyāsa* (superimposition) on the basis of which he has developed not only his metaphysics and epistemology, but has also adumbrated the social dimension of his ethico-spiritual discipline. The

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new social perspective which his philosophy calls for is not inconsistent with the scriptural authority.

Inspired by the vision of oneness, Śaṅkara looked upon the entire universe as *essentially* one, because everything, as the *Upaniṣad* would put it, is Brahman, the sole reality. To him, oneness was real, and diversity, a product of false thinking, was *mithyā*; and so he exhorted the people to realize the truth of oneness by transcending the falsity of difference. His vision of oneness, which he formulated on the basis of the *Upaniṣads* and justified through reasoning in all his writings, provides a theoretical basis for the ideal of "one world" and of "one race". He made us realize that the spirit of a worm beneath the sod, the spirit of a *caṇḍāla* wallowing in mud, and the spirit of a *brāhmaṇa* reciting the *Veda* and performing a rite, are one: *i.e.* there is only one spirit or self, whatever be its embodied status. Social distance and status difference, which are connected with the *upādhis*, are adventitious and so they should not prevent one from realizing the truth of the oneness of the self.

Śaṅkara practised what he preached. His glorious life, though short, exemplified the principle of the unity of theory and practice.

As an intellectual, Śaṅkara respected reasoning and willingly accepted any conclusion that reasoning would lead to. But his reasoning was not "dry logic" (*śuṣka-tarka*). He made use of reasoning as a supplement to, or as inspired by, *śruti*. Since his reasoning was guided by the scriptural insight, it was as daring and compelling as scripture itself was. He did not think of any conflict between scriptural testimony and empirical evidence provided by sense perception and reasoning. The distinction between the *pāramārthika* and the *vyāvahārika* enabled him to show that the language about the Infinite, which is governed by its own grammar, cannot be interpreted and understood through the grammar of empirical discourse.

Śaṅkara was not only a philosopher for intellectuals, but also a spiritual leader for the masses. Being concerned with the suffering of the people, he wanted to help them overcome their suffering. What the people required, according to him, was spiritual upliftment through knowledge; and nothing short of this would be really beneficial to the people. Realizing that the masses also should have access to his thought, he composed manuals and hymns of various kinds, which contained the central teaching of his philosophy.

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This, in short, was Śaṅkara. No wonder, he has been hailed as a world-teacher and a benefactor of mankind.

To commemorate the achievements and contributions of Ādi Śaṅkara, the Government of India decided to organize the Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava for a year from April 1988. A National Committee under the Chairmanship of Sri Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, was constituted to chalk out a programme of action for the Mahotsava. Also, a Co-ordination Committee under the Chairmanship of Sri P. Shiv Shanker, Minister of Human Resource Development, was constituted to work out the details of the Mahotsava and implement them at the regional, national, and international levels. In the first meeting of the National Committee held on 7th March 1988 it was decided to hold an International Seminar and Regional Seminars on the teachings and contributions of Śrī Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkarācārya, to institute Chairs and Memorial Lectures in some Universities, to bring out a Commemorative Stamp, to commission the preparation of an authentic biography of Śaṅkarācārya, and so on.

The Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava was formally inaugurated by Sri Rajiv Gandhi on 21st April, 1988 in New Delhi. The Valedictory Function of the Mahotsava in which Sri Rajiv Gandhi participated was held at Badrinath on 17th May 1989.

The International Seminar on Śaṅkarācārya, which was planned and organized by Professor K. Satchidananda Murty, Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission, was held in New Delhi from 9th to 12th January 1989. Professor Ram Murti Sharma was the co-ordinator of the Seminar. Fifty-three scholars from India and seven from abroad participated in the International Seminar, which was inaugurated by Sri Laliteshwar Prasad Shahi, Minister of State for Education and Culture, Government of India, on 9th January 1989. Professor K. Satchidananda Murty delivered the key-note address in the inaugural function of the Seminar. Sri J. Veeraraghavan, Secretary, Department of Culture, welcomed the delegates and the special invitees of the Seminar. The inaugural function came to an end with a vote of thanks by Sri R.C. Tripathi, Joint Secretary, Department of Culture.

During a Special Session of the Seminar held on 12th January 1989 presided over by Professor G. C. Pande, Professor Ramchandra Gandhi, Professor N. S. Ramanuja Tatacharya, and

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Professor Mandan Mishra spoke on the philosophy of Śaṅkara.

The Valedictory Function of the Seminar held on 12th January, 1989 was chaired by Professor K. Satchidananda Murty. Professor Wilhelm Halbfass, Dr. Karan Singh, and Professor P. Ramachandrudu highlighted the significance of the philosophy of Śrī Śaṅkara and appreciated the efforts taken by the Government of India to organize the Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava. The function concluded with a vote of thanks by Professor Ram Murti Sharma, the co-ordinator of the Seminar.

This Commemoration Volume entitled *Perspectives of Śaṅkara* contains some of the papers presented in the International Seminar, which have been classified into five parts. These papers highlight (1) Śaṅkara's formulation of Vedānta, (2) the Advaita of Śaṅkara vis-a-vis other philosophical systems, (3) the ethico-religious perspectives of Śaṅkara's philosophy, (4) the convergences of, and parallelisms between, Vedānta and modern science, and (5) the place of Śaṅkara in Indian history and culture. This Volume was released by Sri Rajiv Gandhi at the Valedictory function of the Mahotsava held at Badrinath on 17th May 1989.

The printing of this Volume was completed in a period of about three months by M/s Avvai Achukkoodam, who print the monographs and research publications of the University of Madras. We are thankful to Sri V. Seshachalam, Manager of M/s Avvai Achukkoodam for his co-operation. The proof-reading was entrusted to Dr. V. K. S. N. Raghavan, Reader, Department of Vaishnavism, University of Madras; and we appreciate his timely help and cooperation. We express our deep sense of gratitude to Professor K. Satchidananda Murty for his help, guidance, and suggestion in completing the press work. Finally, we thank Sri R. C. Tripathi and other officials of the Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development for their cooperation.

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN
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Editors

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CONTENTS

PART I

ŚAṄKARA'S FORMULATION OF VEDĀNTA

1. Interpretation of Vedāntic Texts
N. Veezhinathan ... 1

2. Śaṅkara's Formulation of Vedānta
G. C. Nayak ... 11

3. The Absolute and God according to Advaita Vedānta
R. Balasubramanian ... 24

4. Śaṅkara's Interpretation of Vedānta
P. Srirama Murti ... 38

5. The Advaita View of the Self
Abheda Nanda Bhattacharya ... 42

6, Svaprakāśatva, Sākṣijñāna, and Sākṣin
Sukharanjan Saha ... 51

7. Is the Individual Self Illusory?
S. K. Sen ... 68

8. An Axiological View of Avidyā
R. L. Singh ... 75

9. The Concept of Advaita: a Re-evaluation
A. Ramamurty ... 88

10. Hermeneutics in the Vedānta of Śaṅkarācārya
S. P. Dubey ... 104

PART II

ŚAṄKARA AND OTHER SYSTEMS

11. "Bīja" according to Śaṅkara and Buddhism
Alex Wayman ... 117

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12. The Empirical Subject: a Comparative Study of Nyāya and Advaita Vedānta Theories
Sibajiban Bhattacharyya ... 126

13. Śaṅkara and the Vaiśeṣika-Naiyāyika Schools
S. Sankaranarayanan ... 143

14. Determination and Position of Tarka: Naiyāyikas vis-a-vis Śāṅkarites
Asoke Chatterjee Sastri ... 156

15. Śaṅkara and Classical Yoga
T. R. Anantharaman ... 167

16. Śaṅkara, the Yoga of Patañjali, and the So-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*
Wilhelm Halbfass ... 178

17. Śaṅkara's Yoga Practice: Notes on the Yogasūtra-bhāṣya-vivaraṇa
Trevor Leggett ... 212

18. Śaṅkara and Mīmāṁsā
K. Kunjunni Raja ... 228

19. Śaṅkara and Pūrvamīmāṁsā
P. Ramachandrudu ... 233

20. The Influence of Śaṅkara's Writings on Rāmānuja
N. S. Rāmānuja Tātācārya ... 241

21. Advaita Vedānta and Western Absolute Idealism
T. L. S. Sprigge ... 253

Part III

ETHICO-RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES OF ŚAṄKARA

22. Śaṅkara's Hymns — Their Philosophical Significance
G. Parthasarathy Rao ... 277

23. Śaṅkara's Views on the Relation between Philosophy and Spirituality
Sitanath Goswami ... 284

24. The Ethical Interpretation of Tattvamasi
K. N. Neelakantan Elayath ... 293

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25. Śaṅkara on Jñāna-yoga
V. R. Kalyanasundara Sastri ... 297

26. The Idea of Spiritual Value
S. L. Pandey ... 307

27. Śaṅkarācārya — The Great Devotee of Lord Viṣṇu
D. N. Shanbhag ... 317

28. The Theological Position of Śaṅkarācārya
G. Sundara Ramaiah ... 330

29. Interpretation of Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa of Brahma-sūtra by Śaṅkara vis-a-vis Temple-Oriented Religion of the Āgamas
Prabhakar Apte ... 340

Part IV

VEDĀNTA AND MODERN SCIENCE

30. Vedānta in the Nuclear Age
Karan Singh ... 347

31. Epistemological Implications of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Mysticism
J. A. Yajnik ... 356

32. Vedānta and Modern Epistemology
G. N. Ramachandran ... 363

Part V

PLACE OF ŚAṄKARA IN INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

33. The Place of Śaṅkara in Indian Philosophy and His Influence on Modern Indian Thinkers
Hiltrud Rustau ... 381

34. National Integration, Secularism and Advaita Philosophy of Value
Bijayananda Kar ... 393

35. Śaṅkara — The Integrator of Indian Culture
S. O. Ramakrishnan ... 404

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36. Śaṅkarācārya as a Successful Organizer
Himansu Chakravarti ... 416

37. Influence of the Philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya on Hindu Temple Architecture and Symbolism
M. N. Deshpande ... 425

38. An Axionoetic Approach to Vedāntic Philosophy of Education
S. R. Bhatt ... 433

39. What We Owe to Śaṅkara
K. Satchidananda Murty ... 440

40. On the Historical and Cultural Significance of Śaṅkara
G. C. Pande ... 450

41. A Note on "Advaita and Annihilation"
Ramchandra Gandhi ... 453

Appendix
Is There No Independence of Spirit in the Philosophic Thought of Ācārya Śaṅkara's Commentators and Later Followers?
V. Venkatachalam ... 455

Contributors ... 467

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श्रीमद्वेङ्कटरामसन्मतिभृतः राजीवगान्ध्यादृतः
सर्वैः श्रीशिवशङ्करादिसचिवैः सोत्साहमुल्लासितः।
आरम्भात्सततानुबद्धविबुधश्रीसच्चिदानन्दकः
भूयाच्छाङ्कर उत्सवोऽप्रतिहतो लोकाय नित्योत्सवः॥

— आचार्य पि. रामचन्द्रुडु

May this Śaṅkara Jayantī Celebration, patronized by the wise counsel of Śrī Venkataraman, honoured by Śrī Rajiv Gandhi, delightfully sustained by Śrī Shiv Shanker and all other ministers, constantly taken care of from the beginning by the learned Śrī Satchidananda Murty, be, without any hindrance, the daily festival for the world!

— Professor P. RAMACHANDRUDU

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PART I

ŚAṄKARA'S FORMULATION OF VEDĀNTA

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1

INTERPRETATION OF VEDĀNTIC TEXTS

N. VEEZHINATHAN

The *Mīmāṁsakas* of the Bhāṭṭa school admit six *pramāṇas*, namely, *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *upamāna*, *śabda*, *arthāpatti* and *anupalabdhi*. The Advaitin too admits all these *pramāṇas* and it is evident from Śaṅkara's reference to them in his commentary on the *Viṣṇusahasranāma-stotra*.[1] A *pramāṇa* is defined as that which gives rise to the knowledge of an entity which is hitherto unknown or veiled by *avidyā* and which is not sublated subsequently. According to Advaita, Brahman is veiled by *avidyā* as it alone is self-luminous. All other objects being inert by themselves need no external cause for being concealed. Further, according to Advaita, Brahman is the only reality and everything else is indeterminable or provisionally real till there arises the direct knowledge of Brahman. When viewed in this light it is only the *Upaniṣads* that could be considered as *pramāṇa* in the strict sense of the term. No doubt all the *pramāṇas* according to Advaita are the transfigurations (*vivarta*) of Brahman through *avidyā*. But noticing that the Upaniṣadic texts give rise to the knowledge of Brahman, and the other *pramāṇas* to the objects of the world, the Advaitin concludes that the sentient element of Brahman is predominant in the *Upaniṣads* and the insentient element of *avidyā* is predominant in the other *pramāṇas*.[2]

Pratyakṣa, *anumāna*, *upamāna*, *arthāpatti* and *anupalabdhi* have the semblance of *pramāṇas*; they are *pramāṇābhāsas*. Their respective objects, being inert by nature, are not concealed by *avidyā*. They are not unsublatable too. Yet they are located in the consciousness conditioned by them; and the consciousness element is concealed by the derivative of *avidyā* known as *tūlājñāna*.[3] The objects are unsublatable till the rise of the knowledge of Brahman. The *pramāṇas*, *pratyaksa*, etc., remove the *tūlājñāna* present in the consciousness conditioned by their respective objects which are unsublatable till the rise of the knowledge of Brahman. It is on this basis they are spoken of as *pramāṇas*, although the *Upaniṣads*

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alone can be viewed as the *pramāṇa* in the strict sense of the term.

Pratyakṣa, etc., although they are *pramāṇābhāsas*, yet are useful on the theoretical side of Advaita in one way or other. Discussion about *pratyakṣa* is useful in this that the Advaitin concludes that the *Upaniṣads* could give rise to the immediate experience of Brahman. *Anumāna* and *arthāpatti* are useful to prove the non-reality of the world. *Upamāna* gives rise to the knowledge of similarity between objects. In the same way, it would give rise to the knowledge that a particular object is dissimilar to another object. The Advaitin, on the basis of this *pramāṇa*, concludes that Brahman is unlike everything and like nothing, and the world, therefore, is not real like Brahman. *Anupalabdhi* is useful in this that the aspirant is able to ascertain the absence of silver in the shell after the rise of the knowledge of the true nature of the shell and to conclude that shell is free from silver in the three divisions of time — past, present and future. He is then able to extend this line of explanation to Brahman and to conclude that Brahman is free from the world and it is acosmic. Thus although *pratyakṣa*, etc., are *pramāṇābhāsas*, yet they have specific functions to perform.[4]

We have now to deal with the role of the ritualistic section of the *Veda*. Śaṅkara is of the view that the ritual-actions prescribed in this part of the *Veda*, when performed without any desire for their fruits, cleanse one's heart and make one fit to pursue a thorough enquiry into the import of the *Upaniṣads*.[5] This view is based upon the text of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*.[6] Those who seek liberation desire to have the knowledge of Brahman by the study of one's *Veda*, by the performance of sacrifice and the offering of gifts, and by austerity in the form of fasting (that consists in limiting one's food as a religious performance).

In the above text, the expressions 'study of one's *Veda*, 'performance of sacrifice and the offering of gifts' and 'austerity in the form of fasting' respectively signify the duties relating to the stage of the celibate, the house-holder and the hermit. And, the relation between the duties pertaining to one's stage of life and the desire to have the knowledge of Brahman is set forth in this Upaniṣadic text.

Śabara in his commentary on the *Pūrvamīmāṁsāsūtra*[7] states that existent entities like sacrificial substances are subordinate to sacrifices, etc., which are to be achieved. In the Upaniṣadic section, however, sacrifices, etc., which are to be achieved are subordinate to the existent entity — Brahman. This means that they

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indirectly lead to the realization of Brahman.[8]

Having thus set forth the role of the ritualistic section of the *Veda* in regard to the realization of Brahman we shall now deal with the Upaniṣadic section which is its direct means. The Upaniṣadic texts when analysed fall into four groups which appear contradictory to one another. We shall set forth these texts.

1. There are certain texts which speak of Brahman as endowed with qualities. The *Chāndogya* text,[9] "*ya ātmā apahatapāpmā vijaro vimṛtyuḥ viśokaḥ vijighatsaḥ apipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasaṅkalpaḥ*," states that Brahman is free from sins, from old age, from death, from sorrow, from hunger and thirst, and is one who possesses desire and resolve that never go unfulfilled. Thus this and other similar texts[10] convey Brahman to be *saviśeṣa*.

2. Another group of Upaniṣadic texts speaks of Brahman as free from all phenomenal elements. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* in its passage,[11] "*aśabdam asparśam arūpam avyayam*," etc., and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text,[12] "*asthūlam anaṇu ahrasvam adīrgham*," etc., convey Brahman as free from all qualities. Again the text of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*,[13] "*neha nānāsti kiñcana*" declares that there is no duality in Brahman. These texts do suggest that Brahman is *nirviśeṣa*.

3. Yet another group of the texts of the *Upaniṣads* states that the souls and the world are not different from Brahman. The *Chāndogya* text,[14] "*tat tvam asi*" is specific in stating the non-difference of the souls from Brahman. Another text[15] of the same *Upaniṣad* "*sarvaṁ khalu idam brahma*," and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text,[16] "*idaṁ sarvaṁ yadayam ātmā*" and the text of the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*[17] "*brahmaiva idaṁ viśvam*," refer to the oneness of the world with Brahman.

4. The text of the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*,[18] "*pṛthagātmānam preritāraṁ ca matvā juṣṭastatastena amṛtatvameti*" emphasizes the difference between the soul and Brahman by stating that the soul could attain liberation by realizing that it is different from Brahman. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text,[19] "*sarvasya vaśī sarvasya īśānaḥ*" states that Brahman rules over everything and thereby implies the difference between the world that is controlled and Brahman that controls.

Thus in regard to the essential nature of Brahman there are apparent contradictions in the *Upaniṣads* and Śaṅkara is chiefly concerned with interpreting the above texts in such a manner that there will be no inconsistency among them.

In regard to the two sets of Upaniṣadic texts, one referring to Brahman as *saviśeṣa* and the other as *nirviśeṣa*, Śaṅkara following the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* states that Brahman by itself is

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free from all qualities; but by its association with *māyā* or *avidyā* it acquires those qualities and they are, therefore, not real.[20]

Śaṅkara's critique of the concept of *samāvāya* would substantiate the above conclusion. A quality could exist in its substratum through the relation of *samavāya*. The latter, in order that it may serve as a relation, must be related to the relata, namely, quality and its substratum. Thus we have another relation between *samavāya* and the quality and yet another relation between *samavāya* and the substratum of the quality. These two additional relations too would require some other relation to get themselves related to their respective relata. And so on *ad infinitum*. It is on this ground that the relation of *samavāya* is held to be a *pseudo-concept*.[21] The qualities that are mentioned in respect of Brahman cannot therefore be really related to Brahman. They are only falsely presented upon it and the cause of such a false presentation is *avidyā*.

The distinctive qualities, although non-real, are mentioned in Brahman — the *nirviśeṣa* entity for the sake of meditative worship upon it. Śaṅkara emphasizes the Advaita position that Brahman as *nirviśeṣa* can only be realized as identical with the true nature of the soul and Brahman as endowed with attributes can only be meditated upon.

> "*ekamapi brahma apekṣitopādhisambandhaṁ nirastopādhi-sambandham ca upāsyatvena jñeyatvena vedānteṣūpadiśyate.*"[22]

It follows from the above that there is no contradiction between the two sets of the Upaniṣadic texts — one proclaiming Brahman to be *nirviśeṣa* and the other as *saviśeṣa*.

As regards the text such as "*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*"[23] and the like which seem to convey the oneness of the world with Brahman Śaṅkara is of the view that they point out that the world has no independent existence apart from Brahman. In other words, the world is superimposed upon Brahman like silver upon a piece of shell and as such it derives its existence and manifestation from it.

Śaṅkara arrives at the above conclusion on the basis of the teaching of the *Chāndogya* text,[24] "*vācāraṁbhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttiketyeva satyaṁ.*" This text states that pot — the effect is merely referred to by name. It is not real. It is thus: we have the empirical usage in the form *mṛd ghaṭaḥ*. The words *mṛd* and *ghaṭa* are in appositional relation to each other. This would not hold good if the senses of the two words are different from each

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other. The words 'cow' and 'horse' whose senses are different from each other are not noticed to be standing in appositional relation to each other. Further, the appositional relation between *mṛd* and *ghaṭa* cannot hold good if the senses of the two words are identical. For, in that case the practical efficiency of the two would be one and the same. This, however, is opposed to perceptual experience. Pot is used for the purpose of bringing water while the lump of clay is used for bringing a pot into existence. Thus pot and clay are not identical too. The result of this argument is that pot is neither identical with nor different from clay. The only alternative left is to treat it as non-real or indeterminable. This is the significance of the expression *vācārambhaṇam vikāraḥ*.

The above view that the effect, *e.g.* pot, is non-real would preclude the possibility of having the varbal usage that pot has come into existence from clay. It is answered that in view of the logical difficulties outlined in the foregoing paragraph it must be held that the above verbal usage is devoid of any content. This is the significance of the expression *nāmadheyam* in the text.

Now the question arises as to what then is real. The *Upaniṣad* states that the cause, namely, the clay alone is real. It is because the clay-element exists prior to the creation of pot, at the time of the existence of pot and after the destruction of pot. It comes to this that the causal factor alone is real and the effect is non-real.

When the *Upaniṣad* states that the clay-element is real what is meant to be conveyed is that the causal element alone is real. It is because when compared to Brahman, the clay-element too is an effect and so it is an appearance of Brahman. The *Upaniṣad* speaks of the reality of the clay-element in order to emphasize the fact that the cause is more real than the effect. According to the *Taittirīya* text,[25] "*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*," etc., it is Brahman that is the cause of the world. The world being an effect is not real. The teaching of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* texts, "*dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṁ caivāmūrtam ca*,"[26] and, "*athāta ādeśo neti neti*",[27] confirm the view that the world is non-real. The former text states that there are two factors which define Brahman; and, they are those which possess material shape. namely, earth, water and fire and those which do not have any material shape, namely, air and space. This text thus affirms the existence of the world in Brahman

The second text referred to above negates the existence of

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the world in Brahman. These two texts when read together convey the absence of the world in the substratum in which it is said to exist.

The *Chāndogya* text,[28] "*sadeva saumya idamagra āsīt*," refers to *sat* or Brahman as associated with the world in its subtle form. And the text,[29] that forms a complement to this, namely, "*ekameva advitīyam*" states that Brahman is free from any object that is either similar or dissimilar to it. It is free from internal differences too. Thus, according to these texts of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya* the world is negated in Brahman where it is said to exist. And the negation of an object in the substratum wherein it appears implies the indeterminable nature of the object. It may be added here that these Upaniṣadic texts have served as the basis for framing the definition of *mithyātva* by Prakāśātman in his *Vivaraṇa* as "*pratipannopādhau traikālikaniṣedhapratiyogitvam.*"[30]

It is in the light of what has been said above that the texts like"*sarvaṁ khalu idam brahma*" and the like are to be interpreted. The words "*idaṁ sarvam*" and "*brahma*" stand in appositional relation to each other. They cannot convey the sense of identity of their senses, because the world which is the sense of the expression *idaṁ sarvaṁ* and Brahman which is the sense of the word *brahma* cannot be identical as the former is inert and the latter is sentient. Hence the appositional relation between the words must be taken in the view of sublation. The above texts convey Brahman as that wherein there is the absence of the world. Brahman is acosmic; it is non-dual.

The text "*tat tvam asi*" conveys the identity of the true nature of the soul and that of God. The primary meaning of the word *tat* is God who is the creator of the world and who possesses all auspicious qualities. This we know from the *Taittirīya* text,[31] "*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante,*" etc , and the *Chāndogya* text,[32] "*satyakāmaḥ satyasaṅkalpaḥ.*" etc.

The primary meaning of the word *tvam* is the soul which is associated with the states of waking, dream and deep sleep and which is an agent and an experient. This we know from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* texts,[33] "*tad yathā mahāmatsya ubhe kūle anusañcarati,*" etc., and, "*tad yathā asmin ākāśe śyeno vā suparṇo vā,*" etc. Any identity between the two senses is impossible in view of the contradictory attributes present in them. Hence Śaṅkara holds the view that these two words through *jahadajahallakṣaṇā* leave out a part of their primary senses, namely, *īśvaratva* in the case of God and

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jīvatva in the case of the soul, and convey another part, namely, the element of pure consciousness. The logical significance of the text "*tat tvam asi*" is the non-difference between the essential nature of soul which is consciousness and the essential nature of God which too is consciousness. The text "*tat tvam asi*" does not speak of the identity between God and soul as such. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*,[34] "*adhikaṁ tu bhedanirdeśāt*" specifically states that we do admit difference between God and soul as such and the texts like "*tat tvam asi*" convey the identity of the true nature of soul and that of God. Hence there is no contradiction between the texts which speak of the difference between the soul and God and which refer to the identity of the true nature of the soul and that of God. In the same way the text,[35] "*sarvasya vaśī sarvasya īśānaḥ*" speaks of the difference between God and the world, while the texts like "*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*" speak of Brahman as free from the world. Thus there is no contradiction among the Upaniṣadic texts.

The text "*pṛthagātmānaṁ preritāraṁ ca matvā*" cited earlier is intrepreted by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Advaitasiddhi* thus:[36] prior to the rise of the knowledge of Brahman the Advaitin admits the distinction between God and soul. It is also accepted that God is the ruler and the soul is ruled over by him. By loving devotion towards God, the soul earns His grace, attains the knowledge of identity between Brahman and the true nature of the soul and is liberated. That the knowledge of identity between Brahman and the true nature of the soul alone is the means to liberation and not the knowledge of difference between the two is arrived at on the basis of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* text,[37] "*mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati*" which states that one who sees duality in Brahman would experience phenomenal existence incessantly.

So far we have explained the interpretation of the apparently contradictory statements of the *Upaniṣads* according to Śaṅkara. The *Upaniṣads* emphasize the non-dual nature of Brahman by stating that the soul is not different from it and the world is indeterminable. As regards the conclusion that the *Upaniṣads* constitute the *pramāṇa* in respect of Brahman, the Advaitin cites the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text,[38] "*taṁ tu aupaniṣadaṁ puruṣam pṛcchāmi.*" But the other text of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*,[39] "*yo'yam vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hṛdyantarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ*," states that Brahman is self-luminous. This means that Brahman does not depend upon any *pramāṇa* for its manifestation. It is clear that the view that scripture is the

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pramāṇa in respect of Brahman is in conflict with the view that Brahman is self-luminous. This position is referred to as a *prima facee* view in the *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka*.[40]

The above difficulty is resolved by the Advaitin thus: in the case of pot, for example, sense of sight gives rise to the mental state (*vṛtti*) in the form of pot. Thus pot is *vṛtti-vyāpya*. This *vṛtti* is inspired by the reflection of consciousness conditioned by pot. The reflected consciousness is known as *phala*. The *vṛtti*-element removes the ignorance present in the consciousness conditioned by pot. The consciousness element which is present in the *vṛtti* and which is known as *phala* manifests the pot. Thus pot is *phala-vyāpya* too.

In the case of Brahman, the *Upaniṣads* give rise to the mental state in the form of Brahman. The latter is *vṛtti-vyāpya*. *Avidyā* present in Brahman is removed by it. Brahman then manifests of its own accord and so there is no need for the reflection of consciousness in the mental state known as *phala* to manifest it. Brahman, therefore, is not *phalavyāpya*. Pot is referred to as an *object of knowledge* as it is manifested by *phala*. Brahman is not manifested by *phala* and so it is *not an object of knowledge*. The *Upaniṣads* are considered to be the *pramāṇa* in respect of Brahman in the sense that they remove *avidyā* present in Brahman by giving rise to *vṛtti* in the form of the latter. Brahman is self-luminous in the sense that it manifests of its own accord when *avidyā* is removed. Thus there is no contradiction between the Upaniṣadic texts which state that Brahman is self-luminous and the *Upaniṣads* which constitute the *pramāṇa* in respect of it. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahmasūrta*[41] states: "The scripture is valid in respect of Brahman by removing duality projected by *avidyā*. Never indeed, does the scripture convey Brahman as 'This is Brahman'." The text of the *Kenopaniṣad*,[42] "*yasya amataṁ tasya mataṁ mataṁ yasya na veda saḥ*," must be understood in the above light. Brahman is realized by him (*tasya matam*) who knows that it is not manifested by *phala* (*yasya amatam*). He who thinks that it is manifested by *phala* (*yasya matam*) has not realized it (*na veda saḥ*).

To sum up: the *Upaniṣads* according to Śaṅkara convey Brahman to be non-dual self-luminous consciousness. The soul is non-different from it and the world is non-real.

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NOTES

Abbreviations

AS	—	*Advaitasiddhi*	*Bṛh*	—	*Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*
BS	—	*Brahmasūtra*	*Muṇḍ*	—	*Muṇḍakopaniṣad*
BSB	—	*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*	*PMS*	—	*Pūrvamīmāṁsāsūtra*
Chānd	—	*Chāndogyopaniṣad*	*SŚ*	—	*Saṅkṣepaśārīraka*
Kaṭh	—	*Kaṭhopaniṣad*	*Śvet*	—	*Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*
Ken	—	*Kenopaniṣad*	*Taitt*	—	*Taittirīyopaniṣad*

1. Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary on the verse — *aprameyo hṛṣīkeśaḥ*, etc., *Viṣṇusahasranāmastotra*, 23.

2. *pratyaksaṁvidavacchinnam ajñānam pramāṇākāreṇa vivartate, saṁvidprādhānyena vedavivartaḥ*, *Sārasaṅgraha* on *SŚ*, II, 102.

3. Veezhinathan, N., "The Locus and Content of Modal Ignorance in Advaita", *Indian Philosophical Annual*, University of Madras, 1972.

4. Veezhinathan, N., "The Problem of Method in Advaita", *Indian Philosophical Annual*, University of Madras, 1968.

5. *BSB*, 3.4.23.
6. *Bṛh.*, 4.4.22.
7. *PMS*, 3.4.40.
8. *SŚ*, I, 143, 312, 395.
9. *Chānd.*, 8.1.5.
10. *Chānd.*, 3.4.2.; *Muṇḍ.*, 1.1.9.
11. *Kaṭh.*, 3.15
12. *Bṛh.*, 3.8.8.
13. *Kaṭh.*, 4.11.
14. *Chānd.*, 6.8.7.
15. *Ibid.*, 3.14.2.
16. *Bṛh.*, 2.4.6.
17. *Muṇḍ.*, 2.2.11.
18. *Śvet.*, 1.6.
19. *Bṛh.*, 4.4.22.
20. *BSB*, 3.2.11.
21. *Ibid.*, 2.2.13.
22. *Ibid.*, 1.1.12.
23. *Chānd.*, 3.14.2.
24. *Ibid* , 6.1.4.
25. *Taitt.*, 3.1.1.
26. *Bṛh.*, 2.3.1.
27. *Ibid.*, 2.3.6.
28. *Chānd.*, 6.1.8.

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29. *Ibid.*
30. *Vivaraṇa*, Part II, pp. 175-76.
31. *Taitt.*, 3.1.1.
32. *Chānd*, 8.1.5.
33. *Bṛh.*, 4.3.18, 19.
34. *BS*, 2.1.22.
35. *Bṛh.*, 4.4.22.
36. *AS*, p. 627.
37. *Kaṭh.*, 4.10.
38. *Bṛh.*, 3.9.26.
39. *Ibid.*, 4.3.7.
40. *SŚ*, 1.116.
41. *aviṣayatve brahmaṇaḥ śāstrayonirvānupapattiriti cet, na. avidyā kalpitabhedanivṛttiparatvāt śāstrasya. na hi śāstram idantayā viṣayabhūtam brahma pratipipādayiṣati. kiṁ tarhi, pratyagātmatvena aviṣayatayā pratipādayat avidyākalpitaṁ vedya-veditṛ-vedanādi-bhedamapanayati, BSB*, 1.1.4.
42. *Ken.*, 2.3.

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2

ŚAṄKARA'S FORMULATION OF VEDĀNTA

G. C. NAYAK

In discussions regarding Śaṅkara's formulation of Vedānta, which I propose to take up here for consideration, the first and the foremost task is to see how exactly Śaṅkara's thought stands in relation to the vast body of Vedāntic texts and literature of which he claims to be a faithful commentator (*Bhāṣyakāra*). It is well known that all along his work while propounding his own philosophy Śaṅkara gives profuse reference of the Vedāntic passages and although at places he refers to his own position in such terms as '*asmat pakṣa*' (our side) or '*asmākaṃ darśanaṃ*' (our philosophy) he also speaks of the invincibility of the Upaniṣadic philosophy (*aupaniṣadam darśanaṃ*)[1] which, according to him, is evidently none other than the philosophy which he himself advocates. This brings out to the fore the special status which Vedānta texts enjoy in the philosophy of the Ācārya; at the same time it is also interesting to note what Śaṅkara, the philosopher, does with these texts and the manner in which he deals with them for propounding his thesis.

Śaṅkara wanted to point out that the Vedāntic literature refers to an existing reality in Brahman and that the passages like '*tattvamasi*' are meant to refer to this existing reality, not to any injunctions or prohibitions. So Brahman can be realised only by concentrating on such passages from Vedānta. That the whole of Vedānta literature (*śruti*) is meant to highlight this existing reality which is non-dual, being identical with the very self of the enquirer, is evident from his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 1.1.4., *tattu samanvayāt*. A word here regarding the recent-day interpretation of *Śruti* as logical analysis of meaning and *Śabda* as linguistic analysis.[2] *Śruti* or *Śabda* cannot, I am afraid, be interpreted as mere linguistic analysis, for in the appropriate context Śaṅkara refers to different passages belonging to the entire body of Vedānta literature and also grades them for his purpose. So

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some of the passages which are regarded as *Śabda* or *Śruti* no less than others are relegated to a secondary status as either not being conducive to illumination or possessing only figurative significance as for example the passages speaking of creation. Moreover, Śaṅkara explicitly speaks in *Brahma-sūtra*, 4.1.3 of the *abhāva* of *Śruti* when true knowledge (*prabodha*) dawns, by referring to a passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *viz.* "*Vedā avedāḥ*". All this will be inconsistent with the interpretation of *Śruti* as mere logical analysis of language. Are we supposed to understand that logical analysis of linguistic forms ceases to function after enlightenment? So the entire body of Vedānta literature was under consideration of Śaṅkara when he was speaking of *Śruti* or *Śabda* as a *pramāṇa*. When he was talking of *vākyārthavicāraṇa*[3] or the analysis of the meaning of a sentence, in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 1.1.2, he was advocating the theory that an analysis of the meaning of the Vedānta passages found in the body of Vedānta literature which has come down to us as *Śruti* or *Śabda* needs to be carried out for the comprehension of Brahman (*Brahmāvagati*). And the entire context of his remark is not to be lost sight of in this connection. The idea was to refute the Mīmāṁsakas who interpreted the entire *śruti* as a body of injunctions (*vidhi*) and prohibitions (*niṣedha*). Certainly one cannot say that illumination in the form of comprehension of Brahman (*Brahmāvagati*) according to Śaṅkara would follow from an analysis by itself of the meaning of any referring expression or any identity statement *vis-a-vis* descriptive or prescriptive statements. Even an analysis of secular statements like 'Thou art the Tenth' (*Daśamastvamasi*) or 'This is that Devadatta' (*So'yaṁ devadattaḥ*) can lead to illumination provided they are considered along side "*Tattvamasi*", etc. found in Vedāntic literature which alone are regarded as *mahāvākyas*. When we get rid of the multiple forms created by *avidyā* or ignorance through an analysis of the meaning of the *mahāvākyas* like *Tattvamasi*, we come to realise Brahman or non-duality which is the ultimate reality according to Śaṅkara

Śaṅkara's conception of reality is derived from the criterion of unchangeability. Whatever is permanently of one and the same nature is real, and knowledge about it is regarded as right knowledge.[4] Śaṅkara's point is that there cannot be any controversy in matters of knowledge. There cannot be any difference of opinion regarding the fire being hot. And the knowledge of fire being hot, therefore, is right knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*) accord-

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ing to Śaṅkara. Taking this clue from our ordinary linguistic usage (*loke*), he builds an ontology of Brahman, the ultimate reality which never changes. And *Brahma-jñāna* is the realisation of such unchanging reality. All those distinctions that we see, being subject to change, can only be regarded as fabrications of *avidyā* or ignorance. When ignorance vanishes through analysis what remains is the unchanging, non-dual reality. Analysis is a method by which ignorance can be removed and *Brahma-jñāna* arrived at provided it is accompanied by all other paraphernalia such as *śama*, *dama*, *titikṣā*, *uparati*, etc. along with *nididhyāsana* or constant concentration on the truth which of course is not a mere linguistic one. On the other hand, it should also be borne in mind that *nididhyāsana* is not concentration on some ontological entity called Brahman, because that would imply a distinction between subject and the object which is not acceptable in the context of *Brahma-jñāna*. That is why it is properly understood as *Brahmānubhava* or *Brahmāvagati* as distinguished from knowledge in ordinary discourse. This *Brahmāvagati* alone is the final end (*puruṣārtha*) to be achieved through analysis of the meaning of the Vedānta passages (*vākyārtha-vicāraṇa*), according to Śaṅkara, and *mokṣa* or liberation is nothing other than that either (*Brahmabhāvaśca mokṣaḥ*).

In this way one can have a proper understanding of Śaṅkara's philosophy as a comprehensive system which has been lost sight of in the maze of piecemeal linguistic analysis imposed on Śaṅkara by some recent interpreters.[5] The impression that is given by these interpreters is that Śaṅkara was concerned only with an analysis of a sort and that too the linguistic analysis of various types of discourses. They even go to the extent of asserting that the Advaitin is talking of various structures of language and that his aim is to reveal the depth structure which is the eternal structure in contrast with the surface structure. "*Brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*," these well-known expressions ascribed to Śaṅkara are interpreted to mean that the logical subject is eternal and incorrigible whereas the logical predicate is corrigible. Moreover, the well-known criterion of Reality put forward by Śaṅkara in the *Gītā-bhāṣya*, *viz.*, '*yat viṣayā buddhiḥ na vyabhicarati tat sat*', is taken to refer to an idea, not to the reality, the interpretation given being "that idea in our discourse which is not capable of change is the eternal or Sat".[6] But in fact Śaṅkara here is speaking of the criterion of *reality* (*N.B.*, *yad viṣayā buddhiḥ*), *not* of mere *idea* in our discourse, nor is there any justification for reducing the distinction

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between Brahman and *jagat* to a distinction of the logical subject and the logical predicate. Certainly Brahman of Śaṅkara was not meant to be identified with a mere logical subject. Logical subject has only a specific and restricted use in its tradition. My point is that there is a peculiar ontic reference in Śaṅkara which cannot be eliminated and this ontic reference cannot be brought out by pointing out the role of logical subject in language. Such exclusive talk of logical subject-logical predicate distinction in Advaita not only involves the fallacy of reductionism, but it also amounts to a sort of philosophical anachronism. Śaṅkara does advocate enlightenment through analysis, no doubt, but analysis here is to be taken as the analysis of *akhaṇḍārthaka vākyas* in so far as it is conducive to the eradication of *avidyā* resulting in enlightenment with regard to the nature of ultimate reality. Ignorance or *avidyā* is pervasive and deep-rooted, and as language reflects this ignorance, analysis of language becomes necessary for eradication of ignorance. But what is important is that ignorance about the nature of reality be eradicated and illumination regarding the nature of the same be obtained – not illumination about linguistic form alone — which would constitute *mokṣa* or liberation according to Śaṅkara.

Avidyā or *adhyāsa*, according to Śaṅkara, is to have the idea of something in something else (*atasmin tadbuddhiḥ*). In this particular context it would signify the idea of the self being confused with that of the object and the idea of the object being confused with that of the self. For Śaṅkara the *lokavyavahāra* or our normal day-to-day transactions are based on *adhyāsa* and are expressed in ordinary language such as 'I am this,' '*aham idam*' and 'this is mine '*mama idam*.' The issue, thus, is ontological, not merely linguistic. It is the all-pervasive and deep-rooted ignorance of the non-dual reality in Śāṅkara Vedānta which is at the basis of our ordinary transactions expressed in the form of linguistic expresions, 'I am this' and 'This is mine.' The confusion expressed in the form of our ordinary language is based on a deep-rooted ignorance which is regarded as *anādi* (beginningless), *ananta* (endless), and *naisargika* (natural). Confusion such as a man considering himself hale and hearty or the contrary so long as his wife and children, etc. are hale and hearty or a man taking himself to be stout, lean, fair, mute, deaf or blind, etc. are all expressions of a deep-rooted ignorance or *avidyā* in Śāṅkara Vedānta. Not only this, the entire transactions of man as an agent or an enjoyer are

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based on this ignorance. It is true that ordinary language reflects this ignorance, but this is only in the case of those who take ordinary language to be revealing the nature of ultimate reality, that is to say so far as ordinary language is taken to be something more than *vyāvahārika*. A philosophically enlightened person may use the same language knowing fully well that this is of mere practical value and all the while he is not misled by the distinctions expressed in the form of ordinary language. Language, therefore, does not necessarily create the illusion of which Śaṅkara speaks, nor is it a fact that the confusion here is merely verbal.

Ignorance consists in seeing distinctions where, in reality, there is no distinction. Ignorance of non-dual reality is all-pervasive and affects one and all and this deep-rooted character and universality of ignorance are emphasised by the term '*māyā*' in Śaṅkara Vedānta. *Māyā* is not to be regarded as a mysterious explanatory principle by means of which the origin of the multiple universe from non-dual Brahman is somehow explained by Śaṅkara, for Śaṅkara as a philosopher was not at all concerned with or interested in advancing any such speculative hypothesis about the process of creation. The fact that every one sees multiplicity where there is distinctionless non-dual reality and is deceived by varieties of linguistic forms is simply designated here as *māyā*.[7] Distinctionless non-dual reality has an ontic status in Advaita Vedānta and the error is therefore an ontological one, expressed in the form of our behaviour, normal transactions, and in ordinary language. In this context it would be worthwhile to remember that *vidyā*, for Śaṅkara, is '*vastusvarūpāvadhāraṇa*' or the ascertainment of the nature of Reality, not mere linguistic illumination.

Analysis no doubt is a means to eradicate error, but it has to be an analysis of the Vedāntic type; unless the *advaita* nature is realised through such analysis, mere linguistic clarification will not do. It is, therefore, essential to make a distinction between mere understanding of the linguistic form through analysis on the one hand, and the eradication of ignorance and consequent realisation of Advaita which is effected through analysis on the other. What exactly is the difference between the understanding of different forms of language and the understanding that eradicates *avidyā* through analysis? This will be clear from the word '*adhyavasāna*' which is used by Śaṅkara immediately following the words '*vākyārtha vicāraṇa*'. Vācaspati Miśra in his

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Bhāmatī has very rightly explained '*adhyavasāna*' as '*savāsanā-avidyā-dvayoccheda*', *i.e.*, the eradication of two types of ignorance along with their tendencies. Ignorance manifests in the ordinary language and in our normal transactions when we regard a person as ignorant in the usual sense (*tūlāvidyā*) as well as ignorance in the sense of having deep-rooted ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*) which is no less reflected in ordinary language to be eradicated, and then only there will be *Brahmāvagati* which of course is *puruṣārtha*. If this point is lost sight of, as it has been in the case of those who regard linguistic illumination to be the be-all and end-all in Śāṅkara Vedānta, how is one going to explain Śaṅkara's condemnation in *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* of the *vidvān*, one who is learned in Vedānta (*vedāntanayāntadarśī*) as Śaṅkara calls him? The same word '*vidvān*', however, has been used in Śāṅkara Vedānta also to refer to a *Brahmajñānī* whose ignorance has been removed, for example when Śaṅkara speaks of *viduṣaḥ sarva pravṛtty asambandhaḥ* in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 1.1.4. To my mind it is very important to draw a distinction between these two types of '*vidvān*' as envisaged in Śaṅkara's literature. The point which I want to make is that mere understanding of the logic of language in the sense of clarifying the distinctions between subject and predicate, or distinguishing between the various types of discourses like prescriptive, descriptive or referring, is not the same as *Brahmajñāna*. Knowledge of these distinctions may be necessary, but my point is that it is not sufficient. Śaṅkara explicitly points out that even if one is intelligent, scholarly, clever and full of insight into the most subtle meanings of the *śāstras* still on being enveloped by *tamas* one regards the unreal to be the reality.[8] Here again the implication is that knowledge of subtle distinctions of meaning is not enough. Moreover, one fails to understand how on the radically linguistic version of Advaita Vedānta one would explain Śaṅkara's statement that the knower of the six systems of philosophy including Vedānta is not fit for liberation whereas one who is free from the bondage of attachment towards objects alone is fit for liberation.[9]

A word of clarification here concerning *Brahmānubhava* or *Brahmāvagati*. I fail to understand how it can be construed as intuitive experience of Brahman when Brahman is not an object of any experience whatsoever and when analysis is supposed to lead to enlightenment consisting in *Brahmānubhava*. I would rather construe *Brahmānubhava* or *Brahmāvagati* as realisation, com-

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prehension or understanding of the nature of ultimate Reality consequent upon the analysis of the meaning of the Vedānta passages. There is little support to be found in Śaṅkara's writings for intuition being regarded as a means of enlightenment. In any case *Brahmajñāna* is certainly not a matter of having an intuitive flash, and therefore it is definitely misleading to suggest that *Brahmānubhava* is a sort of intuitive experience.[10]

'Can the Analytic Approach "save" Śaṅkara as a Philosopher?' — this is the subtitle of a learned article included in the Volume, *Perspectives on Vedānta*[11] recently published in 1988, its main title being 'Analytic Philosophy and Advaita'. The subtitle is indeed thought-provoking and is, to say the least, suggestive in an interesting way. From the subtitle itself one gets the impression that Śaṅkara as a philosopher is perhaps in urgent need of being saved and that some attempt has already been made to save him by a sort of *ad hoc* approach, *viz.* the analytic approach. The author of the learned article, Klive, now raises the question whether such an approach can "save" Śaṅkara as a philosopher. It should be noted in this connection that the learned professor, while referring to those who have tried to interpret in some sense or the other Śāṅkara Vedānta from the perspective of analytic philosophy, has put them all in one basket as it were. This may be a convenient device, practically speaking, but it is, to say the least, a misleading distortion of fact, as will be evident to those who belong to analytic philosophy itself in some sense or the other. Here I will devote myself only to some of the points which are specifically raised by Klive in connection with my approach to Śaṅkara, with a view to reassess my own position *vis-a-vis* his observations, specially because this discussion is expected to throw further light on the topic under consideration, *viz.* 'Śaṅkara's Formulation of Vedānta.'

First of all, I should clarify that my approach to Śāṅkara Vedānta has all along been that of an enquirer (*jijñāsu*) wanting to understand what it is all about. Throughout my career, since the days when I was a student of philosophy at Allahabad, I have been trying to understand the Ācārya in his own terms as far as possible without trying to impose any methodology or idea of my own. And this is how it should be when we are confronted with the work not only of an Ācārya of the stature of Śaṅkara, but also with any work for that matter. It is of course another matter if I have subsequently been equipped with the technique of present-

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day linguistic analysis, and have tried to see how far, if at all, Śaṅkara could be understood in this light. But as far as my knowledge goes, it has all along been an attempt on my part to understand Śaṅkara's own formulation; I have never tried to impose an alien method or technique on an indigenous soil, nor have I tried to "save" Śaṅkara as a philosopher through an analytic approach. For me, Śaṅkara, being a philosopher in his own right, does not stand in need of being saved by any approach, but what is important to note at the same time is that the exact nature of Śaṅkara's philosophical illumination needs to be brought out, rather rediscovered, from time to time so as to be intelligible in the conceptual framewotk of the age to which one belongs. And this is all that I have done in my discussions on Śaṅkara; my task, all along, has been to see what, if any, is the nature of philosophical illumination imparted by the Ācārya. Is it illumination through intuition or illumination through analysis? What is the status of *Śruti* in this connection, according to Śāṅkara Vedānta? What exactly is *avidyā* or *adhyāsa*? Is it mere linguistic confusion? What exactly is the nature and status of *māyā* in Śaṅkara? These are only some of the questions which have kept me occupied from time to time, and my approach, even if analytic in some sense of the term, has never been meant to run parallel to or independent of Śaṅkara's own writings with a view to "save" him as a philosopher, but has been meant to appreciate his position as a philosopher with the help of the conceptual tools available to us without doing any sacrilege to the Ācārya's own writings.

In trying to understand, one of course runs the risk of misunderstanding, and I do not rule out the possibility that I might have misunderstood Śaṅkara at least in a certain context. Regarding this I can say that I should be only too glad to improve my knowledge through learned criticism. As a matter of fact, a part of the thesis advocated by me in *Essays in Analytical Philosophy*[12] which mainly provides material for criticism at the hands of Klive has already been superseded somewhat by my later understanding of Śaṅkara incorporated in my article included in that very Volume, *Perspectives on Vedānta*, although at the same time I must point out that the general spirit of my approach throughout, including that of the present paper, remains somewhat uniform.

Now I will concentrate on three different points raised by Klive in connection with my approach to Śaṅkara. The first one

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is regarding the question whether Śaṅkara was a mere commentator (*Bhāṣyakāra*) or an independent, 'free' thinker. Klive seems to suggest that Śaṅkara was a scriptural commentator, not an analytic philosopher. 'What if,' asks Klive, 'Śaṅkara did not want to be a "free thinker" in Nayak's sense of the word? What if he had other goals and interests in mind (*e.g.* religious goals)?... May be Śaṅkara wanted to be and remained authoritarian. ... The last point, however, does not need to be taken negatively, for we know that "authoritarian" thinkers often make many, if not more, contributions to the development of cultural life (and even philosophy) as "free thinkers".' Now I fully agree with Klive that "authoritarian" thinkers have also made significant contributions to the cultural life and even to philosophy. But the question is whether Śaṅkara was "authoritarian" in the sense in which Klive wants to make him appear. It is well-known that Śaṅkara was a commentator on the *Brahmasūtras*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā*, and that he is popularly referred to as Bhagavān Bhāṣyakāra. But this is not the point at issue. The question is whether this stands in the way of Śaṅkara being an analytic philosopher or a free thinker, not in a trivial but in some significant sense. Śaṅkara advocated enlightenment through analysis of a sort of the Vedāntic statements and he freely chose those Vedāntic statements, *e.g.* *Tattvamasi*, from within the context of the whole of *śruti* which alone, according to him, are conducive to enlightenment through analysis. And as enlightenment in respect of the nature of ultimate reality was the goal to be achieved by him, he even took resort to analysis of secular statements whenever it suited his purpose. Analysis thus plays a significant, and even at times the central, role in achieving illumination in Śāṅkara Vedānta, but it is also true at the same time that everything in Śāṅkara Vedānta cannot be reduced simply to linguistic illumination through linguistic analysis, for the comprehension of non-duality (*Brahmāvagati*) is the final end (*puruṣārtha*) to be realised through analysis. If the author of *Essays in Analytic Philosophy* (*i.e.* I myself in my earlier version) had given any such impression that for Śaṅkara the highest end lies in obtaining a mere linguistic illumination through linguistic analysis, it certainly stands in need of correction, but at the same time it must be pointed out that Śaṅkara does not for that very reason cease to be a free thinker or an analytic philosopher and become "authoritarian".

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The second point which Klive raises is that Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Mahāvākyas* in my terms does not retain any meaning whatsoever. The function of *Tattvamasi*, according to me, is to point at or gesture towards the fact without giving any information about it. Klive points out that the *Mahāvākya* in that case will be reduced to sheer meaninglessness, for "we simply would not be able to recognize such a gesture as a gesture of some significance." "Quite on the contrary, *Tat tvam asi*," says Klive, "finds its meaning within some previously given context. This context is informative and specific. Otherwise, Śvetaketu remains at a loss as to what is being said or pointed at." There is no reason why I should disagree with this. The context in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is well-known and how *Tattvamasi* features at the end of the dialogue between the father and the son, Āruṇi and Śvetaketu, is also known to any student of Vedānta. There is no question of denying the context in which *Tattvamasi* becomes meaningful, for I also fail to see how the analysis of *Tattvamasi* (*vākyārthavicāraṇa*) can be carried out at all in a vacuum without any context whatsoever. It is, according to me, uninformative no doubt, but what I mean by this is that it is factually not informative, in the empirical sense of course. *Tattvamasi*, when analysed appropriately within the context (*vākyārthavicāraṇa*) does give us *brahmajñāna* or *brahmāvagati*, and this certainly is not information regarding an empirical object or even a non-empirical one for that matter to be achieved through certain means. I fail to see how and why Klive has because of this taken me to be unaware of the context in which *Tattvamasi* becomes meaningful and also of the fact that this context itself is informative and specific. It seems that in philosophic discussions, in spite of the best of intentions, we sometimes inadvertently talk at cross purposes on account of over-enthusiasm to make our own point.

The third point raised by Klive is whether *māyā* is an explanatory principle in Śāṅkara Vedānta. *Māyā*, according to me, is not an explanatory principle, for Śaṅkara as a philosopher was not at all interested in giving explanation of how this world of ours has come into being. The universality of ignorance is simply pointed out by Śaṅkara through the terminology of *māyā*. According to Klive, however, "*māyā* seems to remain an explanatory principle, regardless of whether it is taken to be the *śakti* of the Lord, or the descriptive use of language. Our language and its uses — defective or misleading as they may be — belong to the

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world and to offer statements about linguistic uses is to make explanations. They may be different kinds of explanations, but nevertheless they are explanations." Here again, my purpose is served if Klive admits that *māyā* is not a theory of explanation in the sense of explaining how the world is created out of Brahman. It is certainly not a mystifying theory, nor is *māyā* an "indefinable mysterious stuff," as Dasgupta[13] would like to call it. My purpose has been to show, and it is served only if it is seen, that *māyā* in Śāṅkara Vedānta is not a causal theory mysteriously explaining somehow the origin of the universe from Brahman. The talk of *māyā* or magical power of God in Śāṅkara Vedānta is only an indirect way of saying that everyone is numbed and dumbfounded as it were by the compelling ignorance which, being manifest in and through our ordinary descriptive language, creates multiplicity where there is non-dual reality. And if this is also a way of explaining the nature of how things are, I have no objection to the use of the word 'explanation' so long as it is borne in mind that here there is no explanation in terms of a causal theory. Once it is admitted that there is no causal explanation given by the Ācārya in terms of *māyā*, the further point of *māyā* being an explanation in terms of elucidation of the nature of how things are can be conceded to without any difficulty or controversy and, though informative, appears to my mind to be somewhat trivial in the present context.

Finally, I would like to submit that I have tried to *understand* Śaṅkara in his own terms; my aim all along has been neither to interpret or reinterpret him so as to "save" him at any cost. The problem of enormous complexity in matters of understanding philosophy in general and Śaṅkara's philosophy in particular — a point admirably highlighted by K. Satchidananda Murty in one of his recent treatises[14] — is no doubt there, but there seems to be no way out other than discussion, and more of vigorous discussion, with a view not only to make oneself understood, but also to have a better understanding, rather an advancement in understanding, of the philosophy and the philosopher as well as of the position of one another concerned.

NOTES

1. Cf. *Brahma Sūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 2.1.37, "Tasmādanatiśaṅkanīyamidam aupaniṣadaṃ darśanam."

2. Cf. G. Misra, *Analytical Studies in Indian Philosophical Prob-*

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lems (Bhubaneswar, 1971) and *The Advaita Conception of Philosophy: Its Method, Scope and Limits*.

3. Cf. *Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, 1.1.2. "Vākyārthavicāraṇādhyavasānanirvṛttā hi brahmāvagatiḥ, nānumānādi-pramāṇāntaranirvṛttā."

4. *Ibid.*, 2. 1. 11, "Eka-rūpeṇa hyavasthito yo'rthaḥ sa paramārthaḥ, loke tadviṣayaṃ jñānaṃ samyagjñānamityucyate; yathāgniruṣṇa iti."

5. G. Misra, *op. cit.*

6. G. Misra, *The Advaita Conception of Philosophy: Its Method, Scope and Limits*, p. 18.

7. Cf. *Kaṭhopaniṣad Bhāṣya*, "Aho atigambhīrā duravagāhyā vicitrā māyā ceyaṃ yadayaṃ sarvo jantuḥ paramārthasattattvopyevaṃ bodhyamāno'haṃ paramātmeti na gṛhṇāti."

8. Cf. *Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi*, "Prajñāvānapi pandito'pi caturo'pyatyanta-sūkṣmārthadṛk, vyālīḍhastamasā na vetti bahudhā sambodhito'pi sphuṭam."

9. Cf. *Ibid.*, "Viṣayāśā-mohapāśādāyo vimuktaḥ sudustyajāt, sa eva kalpate muktyai nānyaḥ ṣaṭśāstravedyapi."

10. Cf. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, (London, 1951), pp. 510-518, where Radhakrishnan speaks of intuitional experience and translates anubhava as intuition. Cf. also C. D. Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi, 1973), p. 289, where Sharma speaks of 'supra-relational true intuition.'

11. Cf. Visvaldis V. Klive, 'Analytic Philosophy and Advaita' (Can the Analytic Approach "save" Śaṅkara as a Philosopher), S. S. Rama Rao Pappu (ed.), *Perspectives on Vedānta* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1988).

12. Cf. G. C. Nayak, *Essays in Analytical Philosophy* (Santosh Publications, Cuttack, 1978).

13. Cf. S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1952) Vol. II, p. 73. Cf. also Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, where Radhakrishnan says, "The theory of māyā serves as a cloak to cover the inner rifts of his system."

14. Cf. K. Satchidananda Murty, *Philosophy in India* (Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, 1985), p. 202, " 'Understanding' Philosophy is somewhat more complex". See also *ibid.*, p. 201, where Murty points out that a philosophy "may very well be 'grasped and assessed' in more than one way, and no one of these ways can be proved to be exclusively correct and

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proper — Sureśvara and Padmapāda were both direct and loyal disciples of Śaṅkara and both of high intellectual calibre, and it may be presumed both 'correctly grasped and properly assessed' whatever he said; yet their interpretations of some important aspects of their master's philosophy differ."

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3

THE ABSOLUTE AND GOD ACCORDING TO ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN

1. *Overview*

The overview as well as the orientation of this paper can be brought out through a few preliminary observations. First of all, Advaita Vedānta speaks of the real, which is one without a second, as the Absolute and as God on the basis of the distinction between two standpoints — absolute and relative. From the absolute standpoint, the real is called the Absolute or the Ultimate; and from the relative standpoint, it is called God. It means that the terms "Absolute" and "God" are used with reference to one and the same entity from two perspectives. Secondly, though Advaita recognizes the importance of theism, it holds that theism is not final as it involves duality. The dualism of the theistic position must pave way to non-dualism which is the ultimate truth. Advaita, therefore, is trans-theistic and not anti-theistic. Thirdly, the real cannot be known through perception and other sources of knowledge. It can be known only through scripture. It may be pointed out here that even scripture cannot describe it affirmatively as such-and-such; it can reveal the nature of the real only negatively, *via negativa*, as what it is not. Fourthly, since the ultimate is devoid of qualities and relations, names and forms, it can be spoken of as Nothing, as Void, not in the sense that it does not exist, but in the sense that it is no thing or phenomenon we are familiar with in our day-to-day experience. Fifthly, the real is transcendental, and so we have to search for it and discover it in our experience. The philosophical investigation, which is a cognitive enterprise, is transcendentally grounded. Sixthly, the Ultimate which is non-relational and unoriginated and which is the ground of the world, is no other than the Self of the human being. Since the Self in man is limited by the mind-sense-body complex with which it is associated, it *appears* to be

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different from the Ultimate, even so the Self in man is no other than the Ultimate. Finally, according to Advaita to know the Self is to be the Self. Self-knowledge is unique. It is not knowledge *of* the Self involving subject and object relation. Knowing the Self is not like knowing the objects of the world through all kinds of relations. It is a special kind of knowing in which knowing and being are identical.

2. *Absolute and Relative Standpoints*

Man is in the state of ignorance (*avidyā*) during his empirical existence. Not knowing the real, he thinks of himself as a finite limited being thrown into the pluralistic universe of sentient and insentient objects. He knows that his knowledge as well as his power is limited; he also knows that he is subject to likes and dislikes and that his love for others is restricted to a small group. He is ignorant not only of the things of the world, but also of himself. The redeeming feature in a man's life is the fact that he knows that he is ignorant.

Knowledge worth the name is knowledge of the Ultimate, because the Ultimate alone is worthy of knowing, That is why the *Upaniṣad* says that the Self (*Ātman*) should be realized— should be heard of, reflected on, and contemplated upon.[1] Śaṅkara in his commentary on this text says that the Self should be realized, because it is worthy of realization. The Self is worthy of realization for the reason that, when the Self is known, everything else which is *dependent* on it comes to be known.[2] "*Brahman*", "*Ātman*", "*Sat*" — these are the *Upaniṣadic* terms by which the Ultimate is spoken of. So long as a person does not know the Ultimate, even though he knows everything else, he is still ignorant. Nārada as portrayed at the commencement of the Seventh Chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is a classic example in this regard. When Nārada approaches Sanatkumāra for instruction, the latter asks him what he knows so that he could teach him what he does not know. Nārada, therefore, enumerates the various disciplines in which he is proficient — the scriptures such as the *Vedas* and the epics, grammar, mathematics, and astronomy, logic, ethics, and politics, and so on. But still he is in sorrow, because he does not know the Self. And so he requests Sanatkumāra to enlighten him about the Self as the knowledge of the Self alone will help him to cross over sorrow. The knowledge which Nārada possessed when he approached Sanatkumāra for instruction is "lower knowledge" as it relates to everything other than the Self; and "lower

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knowledge", Śaṅkara holds, is ignorance. The point is that so long as a person does not know the Ultimate, he is in the state of ignorance. And when he knows the Ultimate, that is to say, when he attains Self-knowledge. he is in the state of knowledge. By way of contrast to "lower knowledge", self-knowledge, *i.e.* knowledge of the Ultimate is called "higher knowledge".

In the state of ignorance a person experiences a plurality of objects of various kinds including empirical dualities. As contrasted with this, in the state of knowledge a person who knows the Ultimate has no experience of plurality. As stated earlier, one who knows the Self, which is the Ultimate, the Infinite, remains as the Self; that is to say, everything has become the Self and so one does not experience plurality. The contrast between the state of ignorance and the state of knowledge is vividly brought out in many places in the *Upaniṣad*. Consider, for example, the following passage:

> Because when there is duality, as it were, then one smells something, one sees something, one hears something... But when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Self, then what should one smell and through what, what should one see and through what, what should one hear and through what...?[3]

In Advaita, the state of knowledge is called *pāramārthika*, whereas the state of ignorance is called *vyāvahārika*. The term "*vyāvahārika*" is comprehensive enough to include everything other than the Ultimate — the starry heavens above and the moral law within, the choir of heaven and the furniture of earth, the cosmic order and man's triple states of experience, waking, dream, and deep sleep. Even God who, as the cause of the world, is related to the world, is brought within the realm of the *vyāvahārika*. The expression "absolute standpoint" refers to the state of knowledge called *pāramārthika*, and the expression "relative standpoint" refers to the state of ignorance called "*vyāvahārika*".

What distinguishes man from other animals is his competence for knowledge and eligibility for the performance of religious duties.[4] The point to be noted here is that man, who is equipped with the mind,[5] the marvellous instrument indispensable for the acquisition of knowledge of everything, has the ability for acquiring knowledge of the Ultimate through the study of scripture under the guidance of a competent teacher followed by rational reflection and contemplation on the content of scripture. When

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we speak of man's progress from less knowledge to more knowledge, it is progress within the state of ignorance. Strictly speaking, it is no progress at all, as it does not help him to overcome his sorrow. What is required is progress from the state of ignorance to the state of knowledge, from the *vyāvahārika* to the *pāramārthika*, from "lower knowledge" to "higher knowledge". At the *vyāvahārika* level, a person experiences plurality. He considers himself different from the objects of the physical world. Also, he is inclined to think that the physical world must have been created by God and that being finite and limited he is not only different from God, but is dependent on Him as well. In short, he accepts the pluralism of God, man, and the world. However, when he knows the Ultimate, there is a change of vision in him such that he experiences unity in the place of plurality. Just as there is change of perspective with reference to the value system of our day-to-day life as we grow, even so there is change of perspective when there is transition from the *vyāvahārika* to the *pāramārthika*. Referring to the change of perspective following the dawn of knowledge, Gauḍapāda observes that all kinds of distinctions such as the teacher, the taught, scripture and its teaching, which are presupposed for the purpose of instruction to the disciple will disappear when the truth is known.[6]

3. *Immanent Metaphysics*

Making use of the distinction between immanent metaphysics and transcendent metaphysics, we can say that the metaphysics of Advaita is immanent metaphysics inasmuch as the Ultimate which is to be discovered is immanent in our experience. According to Advaita, metaphysics which is inquiry into the nature of reality must analyse the data of our experience with a view to discover the real in it. It means that the real which is immanent in our experience remains concealed in it. What prevents us from seeing the real is the false, which is not real; the real, that is to say, remains concealed by what is not real. Metaphysics, therefore, aims at *dis-covering* the real by removing the covering or the veil put up by the false. It means that the real cannot be discovered unless we are able to identify the false and discard it through inquiry. The discrimination of the real from the not-real can be done only on the basis of the criterion of the real and of the false. Also, the criterion itself must be transcendentally grounded, if it is to be accepted.

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4. *The Absolute and God*

The purpose of definition is to distinguish the thing defined from everything else. There are two ways in which a thing may be defined. We may define a thing in terms of its *essential nature*, as when we say, "Man is a rational animal." Or, we may define a thing in terms of its *accidental attributes*, as when we say, "Man is a dress-wearing animal." The two kinds of definition are called *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* and *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* respectively. "That is the essential nature (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*) of a thing which is present in that thing so long as it lasts and distinguishes it from the rest."[7] Whatever man is and does, rationality constitutes his essential nature; and we distinguish man from other animals with reference to his essential nature. "That is the qualification *per accidens* (*taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*) of a thing which remains in that thing only for a time and distinguishes it from the rest."[8] Wearing dress or walking with the help of a stick are accidental attributes of man. Though they may help to differentiate man from others, they do not constitute the essential nature of man.

The *Upaniṣads* define the Ultimate in two ways — in terms of its essential nature as well as through its accidental attribute. Brahman, the Ultimate, the *Upaniṣad* says, is "the real, knowledge, infinite."[9] This is definition of the Ultimate in terms of its essential nature. When the *Upaniṣad* says that Brahman is "that from which all beings come into existence, that by which they live after coming into existence, and that towards which they move and into which they merge,"[10] it defines Brahman in terms of its accidental attribute, because causality of the world is an external qualification or attribute of Brahman, which is meaningful only in the context of its relation to the world. It is not a definition of what Brahman is *in itself*; on the contrary, it is a definition of Brahman *in relation to* something else.

Thus from the twofold definition of Brahman we get two concepts of Brahman — Brahman-in-itself and Brahman-in-relation. The former is called Nirguṇa-Brahman or the Absolute, while the latter is called Saguṇa-Brahman or Īśvara or God. It means that one and the same reality is viewed in two ways or from two standpoints. When Brahman, the Ultimate, is viewed in itself, it is called the Absolute; and when it is viewed in relation to the world, it is called God. It means that God is the Absolute from the cosmic point of view, and the Absolute is God from the acosmic point of view. So long as we are at the *vyāvahārika* level,

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which is relative and relational, we cannot but speak of the Ultimate as God. We try to relate the world with the Ultimate as the cause of it. But the dualism of God and world which is inherent in the category of causality does not satisfy the demands of reason and has, therefore, to be transcended. It is for this reason that Advaita holds that the dualistic position of theism, even though methodologically significant and valuable, is not final. Unless the Ultimate is known in itself, there is no overcoming of the *vyāvahārika* realm of dualities. It follows that the metaphysics of Advaita, which is trans-theistic and not anti-theistic, is oriented towards the discovery of the Ultimate.

5. *Criterion of the Real*

Śaṅkara formulates the criterion of the real (*sat*) in different ways. The purpose for formulating the criterion is to distinguish the real from the non-real (*asat*) as well as from the false or the indeterminable (*mithyā* or *anirvacanīya*). One formulation of the real may be stated as follows: that is real which exists in itself. If the Ultimate, which is called Brahman or Ātman, is said to be real, it is for the reason that it exists in itself. There is the *Upaniṣadic* support for this criterion.[11] To Nārada's question, "Venerable Sir, on what is the infinite established?" Sanatkumāra's answer is "On its own greatness." The idea that is sought to be conveyed here is that the Ultimate which is infinite and which is real does not have a dependent existence. Conversely, anything that has a dependent existence is not real and therefore cannot be the Ultimate.

Applying this criterion, we can first of all exclude the non-real (*asat*) from our consideration. What is totally non-existent is non-real, *e.g.* the sky-flower. "Sky-flower" is a term by which we convey the idea of what is totally non-existent. Since there is no entity called "the sky-flower" even though we speak about it, the question whether it has dependent or independent existence is absurd. As distinguished from the real and the non-real, there is a third category comprising objects of our experience such as the table and the tree, the mountain and the ocean. Since these objects are cognized by us, they cannot be dismissed as non-real. However, they do not fulfil the criterion of the real, and so they cannot be called real.

A brief explanation is necessary to show why the objects of the world do not answer to the criterion of the real. The objects of the world have origination, because each one of them is an

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effect of some other object. It means that every object of this world has a dependent existence. A little reflection is enough to show that dependent existence is no existence at all in the strict sense of the term. Take for example two objects, A and B. Let us say that A is dependent on B, and B, on A. If objects are mutually dependent, then no object really exists on its own; and we cannot answer whether A exists or B exists. Nor does it help us to explain these objects in terms of a causal series. If A is dependent on B, if B is dependent on C, if C on D, and so on, there arises the difficulty of infinite regress. Here also we cannot say whether any object exists on its own. Nor will it improve the matter if we come back to the first member in the causal series with a view to avoid infinite regress. If we say that A is dependent on B, B on C, C on D, ... and X on A, then there is the difficulty of circularity. Once again it will show that objects which have dependent existence have no existence at all worth the name. According to Advaita, the idea of dependent existence will be intelligible only if there is something which exists on its own, something which is unrelated in itself, something which is unoriginated in itself. That which exists on its own, which is unoriginated and unrelated, is the Ultimate, and that is the real. The real, because it exists on its own, is the *ground* of all objects which are originated and which are relational. Therefore, the objects of the world are not real. Since they are neither real non-real, Śaṅkara characterizes them as indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*), as different from both real and unreal (*sadasad-vilakṣaṇa*), as false (*mithyā*). The Ultimate which is real and the world consisting of originated and relational objects are related as the ground and the grounded.

6. *The Ultimate: One without a Second*

According to Advaita, the Ultimate which is real is one without the second. Objects other than the Ultimate, which have only a dependent existence, are not real. It means that there is no second reality besides the Ultimate. A text of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says that "in the beginning there was Being (*sat*) alone, one only without a second."[12] One way of establishing duality is by proving the reality of difference. Difference is of three kinds. The first variety of difference is the one that obtains between two objects belonging to the same class, *e.g.* difference between two trees. This kind of difference is called *sajātīya-bheda*. Difference that obtains between two objects belonging to two different classes, *e.g.* a stone and a tree, is the second variety, which is called

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vijātīya-bheda. The internal distinction in a thing is the third variety of difference called *svagata-bheda*. For example, we analyse a tree, which is a whole, into its parts such as the root system, trunk, branches, and so on. Here we resort to internal differentiation in a given object. According to Advaita, there is nothing like or unlike the Ultimate. It means there is no plurality of reals. Also, the Ultimate is free from internal differentiation. It is neither a whole consisting of parts nor a substance possessing attributes. The three words in the *Upaniṣadic* text, "*ekam*" (one), "*eva*" (only), "*advitīyam*" (without a second), are intended to deny the three kinds of difference in respect of the ultimate reality. So the Ultimate is one and non-dual, homogeneous, infinite, and without beginning and end.

7. *Objective-Subjective Approaches*

There are two approaches to the study of reality — objective and subjective. The objective approach consists in finding out the source of the world, the stuff out of which it is made, through the methods of analysis and synthesis of the things of the world. Very often this approach results in materialism. As contrasted with this, the subjective approach which consists in the analysis of man and his relation to the objects which are presented to him very often results in subjectivism, sometimes even in scepticism. Since the exclusive application of any one approach leads to the undesirable consequence of reductionism of some kind or other, Advaita makes use of what may be called the synthetic method, which combines both the objective and the subjective approaches to the study of reality. In several places the *Upaniṣad* itself provides the clue for the synthetic approach to the study of the Ultimate. For example, the *Upaniṣad* says: "He who is here in the human person and He who is there in the sun, are one."[13] The sun which is the source of energy for the entire world is singled out in a suggestive way for all the objects of the world. The idea that is sought to be conveyed here by this text is that the real which is immanent in the world is identical with the real which is immanent in man and that, therefore, we have to search for the one reality which is manifest both in man and in the world.

As stated earlier, the objective approach to the study of reality consists in the search for the source or cause of the world. Just as every object requires a cause, even so the world requires a cause. What, then, is the cause of the world? The search for the cause of the world must lead to that which is itself uncaused;

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otherwise there will be the problem of infinite regress. The uncaused cause alone must be real, for that alone, as stated earlier, has independent existence.

According to Advaita, the uncaused cause, or what is generally called the First Cause, responsible for the world must be an intelligent principle. Śaṅkara rejects the Śāṅkhya theory which holds that the world has evolved from a primal material stuff called *Prakṛti*.[14] The order as well as sequence manifest in the world suggests that it must be due to an intelligent principle capable of planning and willing; and the alleged primordial material stuff, because it is insentient, cannot be credited with thinking, desiring, willing, and so on, which are all required for the creation of the world. A material stuff may be subject to change in course of time. But mere change itself is not evolution; and no material object ever reveals any conscious tendency to evolve. It is, therefore, necessary to hold that the cause of the world must be an intelligent principle. The Advaitin supports his position by citing the authority of scripture in this regard. The *Upaniṣad* says that Brahman or Sat, which was one only without a second in the beginning, thought: "May I become many, may I grow" and then "It projected Fire."[15] The text of the *Upaniṣad* makes it clear that Brahman or Sat, the First Cause of the world, was capable of thinking, desiring, and so on. So Brahman which is the Ultimate is the source of the world. The objection raised against the Śaṅkhya theory in this regard holds good in the case of other theories as well which trace the source of the world to matter in some form or other as the First Cause.

Brahman-in-self is neither the cause nor the effect of anything. If it is the effect of something else, then it has a beginning, and whatever has a beginning must have an end. It means that it will cease to be eternal. If it is the cause of anything, then it becomes relational. In that case it is no better than the things of the world, which are relational. If we leave out Brahman, there is nothing else which could serve as the cause of the world. The world requires Brahman, the Ultimate, as its cause; but the nature of Brahman is such that it cannot be the cause of the world. The Advaitin solves the difficulty through *māyā*, the creative principle.

Creation, no doubt, is a mystery. The mystery of creation, according to Śaṅkara, is rooted in the creative principle itself whose ontological status as well as functioning is a paradox.

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Māyā is not real like Brahman; nor is it non-real like the sky-flower. It has unique ontological status such that we cannot say that it is real or non-real. Being different from both real and non-real, it is indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*). It serves as a conditioning principle as it were of Brahman. What is really unconditioned becomes conditioned as it were by *māyā*. In other words, "Brahman-in-self" becomes "Brahman-in-relation" because of its association with *māyā*. According to Advaita, when the association between Brahman and *māyā* took place, no one can say. So long as there is the world, there is *māyā*, the creative principle, in association with Brahman. The Advaitin holds that the relation between Brahman and *māyā* is beginningless (*anādi*).[16] The point to be noted here is that from our perspective there is a climb down as it were in the status of Brahman due to its association with *māyā*, the creative principle. Though the association of *māyā* does not affect the nature of Brahman, it becomes conditioned as it were. And the conditioned Brahman is called Īśvara or *Saguṇa-Brahman* or God.[17] So God is Brahman from the cosmic point of view.

A brief explanation of the causality of Brahman is necessary at this stage. We have already said that Brahman-in-self is not the cause of the world. In the same way, *māyā* by itself cannot function as the creative principle. Like the *prakṛti* of the Śāṅkhya school, *māyā* is material by its very nature, though unlike *prakṛti*, it is not an independent principle. It can function only when it is associated with Brahman. So Brahman and *māyā* together are the cause of the world. While Brahman which serves as the *ground* or the *substratum* (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of the world is the transfigurative material cause, *māyā* which is subject to change is the transformative material cause, of the world.[18] The objects which are related as cause and effect cannot be totally different; nor can they be completely identical. It means that there must be identity as well as difference between cause and effect. Since *māyā*, the creative principle, is material like the world, there is identity between cause and effect. While Brahman is sentient, the world is insentient; and so there is also difference between cause and effect.

The relation between the Ultimate and the world is just like the relation between rope and snake. Just as the rope without undergoing any change is responsible for the appearance of the world, even so the Ultimate without undergoing any change is

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responsible for the appearance of the world. It is not necessary to go into the epistemological issues involved in the appearance of one thing as something else. In the rope-snake example, the rope is the substratum for the appearance of snake thereon; even so the Ultimate is the substratum for the appearance of the world thereon. Apart from saying that the Ultimate and the world are related as the ground and the grounded, as reality and appearance, we cannot spell out the relation that obtains between them. There cannot be any *real* relation between them, since the relata possess different ontological status. While the Ultimate is absolutely real (*pāramārthika*), the world is not real; the world, that is to say, is only phenomenally or empirically real (*vyāvahārika*); and so there cannot be any real relation between them.

God who is the cause of the world cannot be known through sense perception or reasoning. Though God is immanent in the world, we cannot perceive Him through any of our senses, It is true that God is the substratum of the world providing a *basis* for the existence of the things of the world. Nevertheless, we do not see the substratum because of the names and forms (*nāma* and *rūpa*) of the objects which are superimposed thereon. Nor can inference help us to know God. Though inference is a source of knowledge in respect of empirical or phenomenal objects, it is of no avail in the present case. If we argue on the analogy of pot and potter, or house and builders, that there must be a creator of the world, we could at the most establish only a creator with limited knowledge and power, or a multitude of co-operative creators, not a single, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent creator. Realizing the limitations of both sense perception and reasoning, the Advaitin holds that the nature of Brahman, both in its conditioned and unconditioned aspects, can be known only through scripture.[19] God occupies an important place in the metaphysical system of Śaṅkara. Not only is God the creator of the world, but also He is the support and controller of the world and the dispenser of justice.[20] Of course, the interest of the Advaitin is not in establishing the theistic position as the final truth. His interest is in the non-dual Absolute whose realization will mark the termination of the bondage of empirical existence.

The analysis of the nature and the constituents of man occupies the central place in the subjective approach to the study of reality. The philosophy of man as worked out by Advaita is unique. Man as he is in empirical existence is a complex being con-

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sisting of the Self and matter. Without going into details we could say that the material component which serves as the outfit or vesture for the Self consists of the mind, the senses, and the body.[21] The material component has the same ontological status of the objects of the world. For the sake of convenience we can say that anything other than the Self is not-Self (*anātman*). Advaita holds that the Self alone is real.

The material adjunct which is not-Self and which serves to limit the Self is not real; it is only phenomenal in the same way as the objects of the world are phenomenal.

With a view to establish the reality of the Self and the unreality of the material component, Advaita formulates the criterion of the real in another way. This criterion of the real, it should be borne in mind, is not inconsistent with the one formulated earlier. According to this criterion, that is real which is uniformly present in all our experience. Man has three states of experience – waking, dream, and deep sleep. In the waking state (*jāgrat*) he is conscious of the objects of the external world through the functioning of his mind and the senses. In the dream state (*svapna*), the mind alone functions and projects objects of its own. The mind as well as the senses do not function in the state of deep sleep (*suṣupti*) with the result that there is no awareness of anything, external or internal at that time. While the waking and dream states provide us with what may be called a knowledge situation, the state of deep sleep is not a knowledge situation. While the mind and the senses are sometimes present and sometimes absent, only the Self which is consciousness is uniformly present in all the three states of experience. Advaita, therefore, holds that the Self alone is real.

Śaṅkara maintains that consciousness is one and indivisible. It will not be possible to prove that there is a plurality of consciousness. However, there is a plurality of mind-sense-body complex. Two persons differ not because of the Self or consciousness in them, but because of the mind-sense-body complex which qualifies consciousness. One and the same consciousness appears to be plural because of the plurality of adjuncts. Further, consciousness is not relational. However, it appears to be relational due to the functioning of the mind. It is well-known that consciousness is intentional in the waking and dream states. There is consciousness of a tree or a table in the waking state; there is consciousness of various (dream) objects in the dream

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state. But in the state of deep sleep there is no consciousness of anything, external or internal. In other words, while consciousness is intentional in waking and dream states, it is not intentional in deep sleep. It is the presence or absence of the mind that makes consciousness intentional or not intentional. Consciousness by its very nature is not intentional; its intentionality is only adventitious. It follows that consciousness is not relational. Moreover, consciousness is not an object of knowledge. While everything else is known through consciousness, how is consciousness known? Not through another consciousness; for there is no second consciousness; and such an argument will result in the difficulty of infinite regress. Further, since consciousness is one and indivisible, it cannot be said that it is both the knower and the known in the same act of cognition. In view of these difficulties, the Advaitin maintains that consciousness is not an object of knowledge. Consciousness is self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*) in the sense that while it reveals everything else, it itself is not revealed by anything.

Considering the nature of the Ultimate which is the ground of the world and of the nature of the Self in man, Advaita maintains that the Ultimate which is called Brahman is no other than the Self (*Ātman*) in man. It is this identity of Brahman and Ātman that is taught as the purport of the scriptural teaching by the principal texts of the *Upaniṣads* such as "This Self is Brahman,"[22] "That thou art."[23]

Man is, indeed, the Self, though in empirical existence he is associated with the material adjunct. Though the Self is the reality in man, he does not realize this due to his ignorance (*avidyā*). Not only does he not know the Self in him, but also he identifies himself with the mind-sense-body complex and transacts his business of life. It is this identification with the mind-sense-body complex that is said to be the bondage of empirical existence. If the mind is controlled and stilled through ethical and spiritual discipline, one can achieve the state of the absence of mental modifications (*citta-vṛtti*). When the mind becomes a non-mind, the Self which is ever present remains in its natural state; a person who has come up to this stage of development *knows* or *realizes* the Self in him, and remains as the Self. It is a case where to know the Self is to be the Self. That is way the *Upaniṣad* says that the knower of Brahman remains as Brahman.[24] Such a person is the liberated-in-life (*jīvanmukta*).

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NOTES

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.5. See Śaṅkara's commentary on this text.

2. *Ibid.* Also see *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.1.3 and Śaṅkara's commentary thereon. Śaṅkara observes: "Even after having read all the *Vedas* and learnt all else that there is to be learnt, until one knows the Self, one's main purpose in life remains unfulfilled".

3. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.14. See also *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 7.24.1.

4. In the words of Śaṅkara, "*karma-jñāna-adhikāraḥ*". See Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.1.1.

5. See *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.4.19: "Only by the mind is it (*i e.* Brahman) to be known."

6. Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, 1.17-18.

7. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *The Philosophy of Advaita* (London: Luzac & Company, 1938), p. 104.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.1.1.

10. *Ibid.*, 3.1.1.

11. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 7.24.1.

12. 6.2.1.

13. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.5.5.

14. See Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 2.2.1-10 for a detailed discussion on this issue.

15. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.2.2-3. See also *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, 1.1.1-2.

16. Advaita speaks of six things as *anādi*: (1) jīva, (2) Īśvara (3) the pure consciousness (*i.e.* Brahman), (4) the difference between jīva and Īśvara, (5) *avidyā* (otherwise called *māyā*), and (6) the relation between *avidyā* and consciousness.

17. See *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 4.10: "Know that *prakṛti* is *māyā* and the wielder of *māyā* is the great Lord..."

18. In the technical terminology, *māyā* is the *pariṇāmi-upādāna-kāraṇa*, whereas Brahman is *vivarta-upādāna-kāraṇa*.

19. See Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma-sūtra*, 1.1.3.

20. See *Brahma-sūtra*, 2.1.34 and Śaṅkara's commentary thereon.

21. The detailed explanation of the material component should be given in terms of five sheaths (*pañca-kośa*) or three bodies (*śarīra-traya*).

22. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, 2.

23. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.8.7.

24. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 3.2.9.

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4

ŚAṄKARA'S INTERPRETATION OF VEDĀNTA

P. SRIRAMA MURTI

Śrī Śaṅkara based his philosophy of Advaita on the Vedānta or the *Upaniṣads* and the two other *prasthānas* namely the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Brahmasūtras* which are themselves dependent on the *Upaniṣads*.[1] For him the *Upaniṣads* form the concluding portion of the *Vedas* and it is a secret doctrine communicated by the *guru* to *śiṣya* in confidence.[2] Considering the *Upaniṣads* as part of the *Vedas*, he distinguishes two sections of the *Vedas* — the *aparā vidyā* and *parā vidyā* portions — the *Karmakāṇḍa* and the *Jñānakāṇḍa*.[3] They are distinct with different purposes and different subjects and consequently different means are suggested for the attainment of those goals. The *pūrvabhāga* — (*Karmakāṇḍa*) portion has *abhyudaya* and *svarga* as its end and it deals with *Yāga*, sacrifices. *Svarga* is not the final goal of man. It is only a relative excellence and bliss. It is long-lasting but not everlasting. It is attained only if we perform the sacrifices and other *karmas* enjoined in the *Vedas* with meticulous care. There are different types of long-lasting attainment as a result of these acts, but when the effect of the *puṇya* is exhausted one has to return to this human form. It is *pravṛttimārga* which entangles one in the mesh of transmigration.

The *Upaniṣads* teach *nivṛtti-mārga* — the inward path to self-realisation, the realisation of the individual self that is one with the universal self. Only a person who has given up his desires for the attainment of the pleasures of the world and the other worlds like *svarga*, that traverses this path to self-realisation. The means are different — *viveka*, *vairāgya*, *śamādiṣaṭka* and *mumukṣutva*. When he engenders in himself a strong desire for release from this *saṁsāra* — he searches a true guide — a *guru* — who gives him the secret teaching. He listens to it, deliberates upon it, contemplates it and then assimilates it in such a way that he perceives the truth intuitively as immediate knowledge. It is a direct knowledge

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where the *śruti* is incidentally instrumental. The *śruti* only helps in working up the disposition to self-realisation, but self-realisation is not, strictly speaking, the verbal cognition arising out of our knowledge of the *śruti* alone.

Śaṅkara adopts the methods of interpretation of the *śrutis* given by the Mīmāṁsakas to a great extent. The main aids to arrive at the purport, *tātparya*, of a text are the following according to Mīmāṁsā: *upakrama*, *upasaṁhāra*, *abhyāsa*, *apūrvatā*, *phalam*, *arthavāda*, and *upapatti*.[4] The Mīmāṁsā dictum is "*arthaikatvād-ekaṁ vākyam*." The text that has a single purport is one. It is a unified text — it is a *mahāvākya*, the different sentences and portions being *avāntaravākyas*. They have unity of purport. The different sentences have to be strung together in a thread and interpreted to arrive at the purport of the entire text. If necessary the details given in different distant texts have got to be taken together, *guṇopasaṁhāranyāya*.[5] Sometimes the gist of the *prakaraṇa* is given in a nutshell in a key sentence which is exclusively known to be *mahāvākya* in Vedānta.

The *Upaniṣads* embody the different successive states of religious experience of the respective *Ṛṣis* formulated in a symbolic language. Though the exegetical and logical principles are applicable to interpretations of linguistic expression of ordinary cognitive perceptions and experiences, the unitive experience is taken as the primal and final experience by Śaṅkara and he tried to adapt and interpret the passages to that end.[6] Here he followed the footsteps of Gauḍapāda. The very fact that he commented on the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* and the *Kārikās* thereon in one breath proves the importance given to the standpoint of Gauḍapāda. In the interpretation of the Upaniṣadic texts, the Buddhistic thought has also influenced both of them and in answer to their contentions they built up a magnificent edifice of Advaita philosophy which continued to be indomitable being reinterpreted by its followers defending it and adapting it to new philosophic and scientific milieu.

How is it that the same Upaniṣadic texts give rise to such different interpretations? How are we to defend them on the basis of logical and exegetical normative rules? The answer is given by the great linguistic philosopher, Bhartṛhari. To him the meaning of a sentence is of the nature of a flash, an intuitive perception of a sense on listening to the sentence and grasping its ordinary denotation — *pratibhā vākyārthaḥ*. But it may not be the

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same to all even in the case of the scriptures much less with the literary texts. The mental disposition, intellectual training, attitudinal factors and culture do influence the process and nature of our understanding of the text. This does not, however, mean that there are no definite factors in its understanding. But the nature does differ, and its explication in terms also varies from time to time aud culture to culture. Hence they are called "living texts" that inspire and influence generations of men— philosophers and ordinary men alike. But even here the interpretation of Śaṅkara that the *mahāvākyas* are not to be taken literally, but as indicative and symbolic of the unified experience of Brahman is of great significance and value.

Śaṅkara's interpretations make the contemplation of the meaning of *mahāvākya* open up a vision of the reality that is the Self by a cognitive process of the Self which is above the mental and sensual experience. As T.M.P. Mahadevan puts it, the vision is called an Advaitic experience only in this sense. It stands for an open "vision of what is real, without any commitment to a particular standpoint. It is not to be identified as monism that is opposed to pluralism or as idealism which is antagonistic to realism. None of the philosophic labels can contain the truth of Advaita. Even the term '*advaita*' can only serve as an indicator of the plenary experience; it is not a pincode which defines that experience."[7]

Saṅkara rightly declares that the scripture is an authority for the existence of God but not for the things perceptual and logically provable. In matters of day-to-day life it is only the other *pramāṇas* that should help us.

Above all, the style of interpretation of the scriptures and commentaries of Śaṅkara is distinctively profound. Simple and profound in propounding his own views, he refutes the others' points of view with understanding and empathy taking them as steps towards the final truth rather than as opposing views. Abhinava is another such great philosopher-aesthetecian we meet with in this context.[8]

NOTES

1. (a) Colophons to the *Gītā*: "*bhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ...*"

(b) *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara, 1-1-2-2: "*vedāntavākya-kusuma-grathanārthatvāt-sūtrāṇām.*"

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2. *Taittirīyopaniṣadbhāṣya* of Śaṅkara: "*upaniṣaditi vidyocyate. tacchīlinām garbhajanmajarādi-niśātanāt-tad-avasādanādvā brahmaṇo vā upanigamayitṛtvāt, upaniṣaṇṇaṁ vāsyāṁ śreya iti. tadarthatvādgrantho'pi upaniṣat.*"

3. "*phalabhedaḥ, viṣayabhedaḥ, adhikāra-bhedaśca...*"

4. "*upakramopasaṁhārau abhyāso'pūrvatā phalam,*
arthavādopapattī ca liṅgaṁ tātparyanirṇaye."

5. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara, 3-3-8-17: "*śrutyantaraprasiddho hi samānaviṣayo viśeṣaḥ śrutyantareṣu upasaṁhartavyo bhavati.*"

6. *Ibid. Samanvayādhikaraṇa*: "*na dharmajijñāsāyām-iva śrutyādaya eva pramāṇam-brahma-jijñāsāyām. kintu śrutyādayo'nubhavādayaśca yathāsambhavamiha pramāṇam. anubhavāvasānād bhūtavastu-viṣayatvācca brahmavijñānasya.*"

7. Pp. 26-27. T.M.P. Mahadevan in *What is Living and What is Dead in Indian Philosophy?* (ed.) Dayakrishna and B.V. Kishan, Andhra University, Waltair, 1978.

8. *Abhinavabhāratī* on *Rasasūtra* of the *Nāṭyaśāstra.*

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5

THE ADVAITA VIEW OF THE SELF

ABHEDA NANDA BHATTACHARYA

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, Brahman is defined as '*satyam-jñānam-anantam brahma*.'[1] Brahman is pure being, pure consciousness, and infinity. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* Brahman is described as *vijñānam-ānandam-brahma*.[2] He is knowledge and bliss. Paul Deussen quotes *Sarvopaniṣatsāra* (No. 21) where Brahman is defined as true, knowledge, infinite, and bliss.[3] According to some Vedāntins, the words, *sat*, *cit*, and *ānandam* refer to *saguṇa* Brahman, and according to others, to *nirguṇa* Brahman. The former group contends that the words are positive characterising terms, and therefore cannot be employed in connection with the supreme *Brahman*, which is to be described as only by negation. But the others say that these words can very well refer to the attributeless Brahman; for these words are used in a negative sense. *Sat* indicates that *Brahman* is not *asat*; *cit*, that *Brahman* is not *ajñāna* or nescient; and *ānandam*, that Brahman is not a mere absence of pain. If we define Brahman as '*satyam jñānam anantam brahma*,' then the word *anantam* means infinity, so the meaning will be that Brahman is limitless. Brahman is not limited by anything.

It may be objected that the use of Being etc., as adjectives to the self will make it an object possessed of attributes and will not imply an undifferenced entity. But the reply is that the proposition cannot mean a substantive characterised by attributes. Where the object is already known, adjectives are necessary to furnish fresh information in regard to it. But if the object is not known at all or falsely known, it is meaningless to use adjectives in respect of it in order to show its proper differentia or property or even its accidents. It can only be defined as the bare object. And when the definition is once stated, its purpose is fulfilled and no adjective is necessary to distinguish it as a relational whole. For instance, looking at the moon-lit starry heavens, somebody asks, 'Which is the moon?' The reply will be 'The most resplen-

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dent is the moon'. Here the words 'most' and 'resplendent' do not carry the sense that the moon is most resplendent. For the question is about the moon only and the answer will be to point it out as the pure object merely and not to show it with its characters. Else there will be lack of harmony between the query and the reply. Thus the adjectives used point out the bare identity of the moon. The relatedness of the moon can also be had from other sources, *viz.*, perception and others. Here, however, the adjectives lose their original sense of demarcation and express the bare identity of the moon. In the case of the moon, of course, there may also be a sense of demarcation as there is no conflict between the intended meanings of the adjectives and the moon itself. But this is impossible in the case of Brahman, because the meanings of Being, etc., as forming a determinate whole clash with the word 'infinite' expressed in connection with Brahman. Hence in such cases, adjectives merely point to the bare identity of the object and not to the object characterised by attributes.[4]

Thus we see that the proposition expressing the definition of the self is not predicative, *i.e.*, it does not reveal a relation between the objects meant by the words composing it; but, by implication, it expresses the bare identity of the object intended by the words. Such propositions do not require the primary meaning of words in order to signify the pure nature of objects.[5]

Being, consciousness, and bliss are not related to one another. In the case of a lotus of deep blue colour, the word 'deep' is an adjective to the blue colour. The word 'being', on the contrary, is not adjectival to consciousness, nor consciousness to bliss. They are all adjectives to the self. Hence they directly refer to the self. Each of them independently expresses the full nature of the self.[6] It may be asked, why is then the use of three different words? The answer is that these non-synonymous words signify that the self is not their opposites. The self is not non-being, non-intelligence and non-bliss. Are we then to understand that the nature of the self is only negative? But this is impossible. If in the definitive judgment 'the self is not non-being, non-intelligence and non-bliss' the subject 'self' were itself negative, the whole judgment would turn out meaningless, for no negation is ever justified apart from its positive ground.[7] The self, thus, in the above judgment cannot be taken as merely negative. The predicates being, consciousness and bliss therefore not only differentiate the self from their opposites, but also do not, at the same

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time, leave off their intended meanings. Had they been merely exclusive they would not be able to fix the substantive. Hence if the words retain their primary significance, they will be able to distinguish the self from all other objects which imply their opposites. And the term 'self', too, is significant only in its fixed import.[8]

Although the predicates are not equivalent in sense and usage, still they have some identity of meaning. They are not wholly different in significance. Sarvajñātman points out that the words imply one another. If being is distinct from consciousness, then it becomes an object of knowledge. It will then lose its import; since all objects of knowledge are false.[9] Again, if consciousness be distinct from being, it would become untrue. And if bliss be distinct from being and consciousness, it will be false. Therefore the words possess some identity of purpose.[10]

Thus we see that the words are neither equivalent nor different in import. They cannot be wholly equivalent, since there will be mere repetition in significance. Nor can they be wholly different, for then they will not be able to signify the undifferenced homogeneous reality (*akhaṇḍa-ekarasa vastu*). Though the reality meant is one, the objects which are excluded are many. Thus the words perform a dual function. They refer to the intended reality, and they also exclude the objects which are distinct from it.[11]

Meaning of Sat, Cit, and Ānanda

The Self is Being

What exactly are we to understand by being, awareness and bliss? The Advaitin defines being as 'absence of negation'. Being cannot be negated. That which can be negated has some determination — spatial, temporal or in content. A thing bounded in space is obviously negated by things outside. Similarly with things temporarily limited. They are limited by the past and the future time. They were absent before their origin and they will be non-existent after they cease to be. Thus they are correlates of both antecedent and emerged negation. Determination in content, again, is the determination of an object by other objects. This means its distinction from similars, distinction from dissimilars, and distinction within itself. A tree is differentiated from its similars, *i.e.*, from other trees, and from its dissimilars, *e.g.*, stones etc. It also contains distinction within itself, for its parts are distinguished from one another. Such triple differentiation signifies

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that a thing cannot enter into the 'being' of another. Rather one thing sets a limit to another thing. The distinction between objects shows that the cognition of one object rebounds or recoils from another object. The object from which the cognition rebounds sets a limit to the former objects, *e.g.*, the knowledge of a cow recoils from a horse. This proves that the horse is a limit to the cow. Such a limit is seen only among distinct objects. But 'being' has no such distinction. Therefore 'being' is infinite or limitless.[12] The self or 'being' is not bounded in space, because it extends beyond space; nor limited in time, for even that which surpasses the temporal limit has 'being'. Nor is it determined by other things, since the determinants themselves possess 'being'. Being, then, is ubiquitous and eternal. It is also the life and soul of everything else. Thus while limited objects are negated in some place or in some time or by some other objects, 'being' cannot be a negatum at all. It persists everywhere. Every other thing has 'being' only as superimposed on it. Without the 'being' that is the base, a thing is as nothing. That is, whatever possesses being derives it from 'being' as such on which it rests or is superimposed.

It may be asked, is not 'being' exclusive of the 'imaginary'? No, it cannot be said to be exclusive of the imaginary. For to be exclusive means to be a correlate of difference. Being could have been a correlate of difference, had the difference from 'being' been existent somewhere. But the difference from 'being' does not exist anywhere. It may be rejoined that the difference from 'being' can be said to reside in the imaginary. But this is imposible. For the imaginary, being itself non-existent, cannot be the substrate of any entity. Therefore 'being' cannot be said to be exclusive of any entity, real or imaginary.[13]

The Self is Consciousness

The self is also consciousness as such. Consciousness is not a contingent quality that rises or sinks with the presence or absence of objects. Nor does it expand or contract with the appearance or disappearance of objects. It eternally shines forth in unabated form. It is the light that shines uniformly and reveals objects when the veil of nescience is removed from them. The light of consciousness never ceases or wanes. So it cannot also be said that knowledge is not self-luminous but is dependent on others for its revelation.

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The Self is Identical with Consciousness

This self-revealing consciousness is not an adventitious quality of the self. It is the very being of the self. That is, the self is identical with consciousness. It cannot be knower in the sense of an agent of the act of knowledge. If it be so, it cannot be real or infinite.[14] The nature of the self must be transformed by the property of being an agent of knowledge. Therefore it cannot be real. For the real is unchangingly eternal. The self as agent cannot also be infinite. The infinite is that which is neither limited in space and time, nor distinguished from other objects. An object which is not limited by anything else cannot be distinguished from others as an exclusive entity; but the agent of knowledge is distinct from knowledge itself and also from the object of knowledge. Hence the self cannot at once be infinite and the agent of knowledge as well. Therefore the self is knowledge as such. The self cannot also be the object of knowledge, for then there cannot be a knower of the self. It cannot be said that the self is its own knower, since it is a contradiction to suppose that the agent of knowledge is also the object of knowledge. It cannot also be held that the self is knower in respect of some person and an object of knowledge to another person. For the self is indivisible and without parts and a partless entity cannot simultaneously possess a duality of form, the knower and the known.[15] Therefore, the self must be regarded as consciousness itself. It may be asked, how can the permanent self be identified with the ever-shifting forms of consciousness? We do not have knowledge of the blue colour when we have the knowledge of the yellow colour, a fact that might show that consciousness differs along with the objects. But it is to be emphasised that consciousness as such is not different here, but is always revealed as one, although the objects may vary. Consciousness never appears to rise or sink. Its determinats or the objects alone appear or disappear. But do we not often see that, though the object is the same, there is cognitional difference in respect of it, as in the case of perceiving and recollecting the same object? And does it not prove that knowledge as such differs? The reply is that there also we find some difference in the object. With regard to memory the object appears with 'past knownness' as being attached to it. But, in the case of perception, the object unattended by any such property shines forth. Thus there are different objects and they are the causes of the distinct cognitions. Besides the opponent can-

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not then really hold that the distinctness of objects induces some distinction in respect of cognition, as the opponents themselves admit distinct cognitions even with regard to a single object and a single cognition in respect of distinct objects (as in the case of God's knowledge).[16] But why then does cognition appear to be many? The reply is that the mental modes (*antaḥkaraṇa-vṛtti*), which precede knowledge or awareness, are distinct with every distinction of objects and it is they which determine or limit the one, uniform or formless consciousness: "*arthenaiva viśeṣo hi nirākāratayā dhiyam*" (*Kusumāñjali, caturthaḥ stabakaḥ*). Consciousness, by itself, is unitary and the unity is proved by the fact that different cognitions, in spite of their difference, appear as 'cognitions' (*anuvṛttipratyaya*). It is quite like the case of the letter, say B: wherever the letter B occurs, we have cognitions like 'this is a B', 'this is a B' and so on. This does not prove that there are so many distinct B's. Cognitions do not really differ in each case, although we cognise differently in different instances of objects. Thus it is seen that consciousness is one, but the objects or the superimposed determinants of consciousness are distinct. And this consciousness is no other than the permanent self.[17] It has already been shown that the self cannot differ from consciousness. The self can neither be the substrate nor the object of consciousness. And if consciousness be self-luminous, the self which is non-different from it is also self-revealing.

The Self is Svaprakāśa

That the self is self-luminous is proved by the absence of doubt, error or contrary knowledge in respect of it. Nobody entertains any doubt as to the existence of the self. Nor does any one err that one's self is not 'I,' but something different from the 'I'. Nor is there any contrary or negative knowledge of the self that 'I am not'. Everyone unfalteringly asserts 'I am'. Such a declaration is never possible unless the self is self-revealing. (In a judgment the nature of the subject is always revealed beyond doubt, but there may be difference of opinion in respect of the predicate. Knowledge, contrary knowledge, error or doubt, if there be any, will then refer to the nature of the predicate. Predicates may differ, but the subject is beyond doubts. So the nature of the self is always revealed correctly, but its properties may be differently known).[18] Further if the self be not self-luminous, there would have been doubts as to whether a jar is known by me or by some other person. But such doubts never occur. Therefore, it

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should be held that the soul is always self-revealing.[19]

In all the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep consciousness of the self is never found to be wanting. In the awakened state, the self is confronted with the 'aggressive' objects and consciousness is always wide awake. In dream, the self sports with images and it is proved thereby that consciousness is a persistent factor. In dreamless sleep, too, it is not lost either. Apparently the self-manifestation is absent in dreamless sleep. When a man returns to the waking state after deep sleep, he says that he did not know anything in that state. This statement seems to show that self-manifestation ceased for some time. But really, the self-revelation was not wanting even in dreamless sleep. Just at the break of deep sleep a man often says that he had a blissful sleep. Such experience proves that the bliss was directly felt at the time. This present experience is nothing but a remembrance of the past event. And memory can only be of a presented datum. The assertion of the man in waking state that he did not know anything in dreamless sleep also proves that the self was directly aware of positive nescience. Thus self-revelation never disappears in any of the states. And this constant consciousness will be inexplicable unless we assume that the cause of self-revelation is its own nature.[20]

The Self is Bliss

The self is also bliss as such. But in the waking state and in dream,we do not realise that the self is bliss. There it enjoys both pleasure and pain. The self derives pleasure when an object appears to be favourable to it and it feels pain when an object affects it adversely. How, then, it may be asked, can it be said that the nature of the self is bliss? In reply it has been pointed out that in the waking state and in dream the self does not appear in its purity and appears sense-bound and image-tied respectively. As a result of false identification with the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the self appropriates the properties of the *antaḥkaraṇa*. The modification of the *antaḥkaraṇa* in the form of pleasure or pain is due to objects and it informs the self to a great extent. That is why the self feels pleasure at one time and pain at another. But in dreamless slep the self is divested of its objective garments and is also free from its bondage to images. The self, at that stage, appears with its inherent freedom and enjoys intrinsic bliss. This bliss should be recognised as natural to the self, since the self then is detached from non-sentient objects.[21] The experience of bliss in

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that state is also attested by later memory of the experience. Even in the waking state it can be shown that the self is *bliss*. When a man suffers from excruciating pain, he wants relief from his pain but not from his existence. He does not want his own extinction. The desire for the continuance of the self persists. But since nothing is really desired except happiness, the self whose continued being is desired is nothing but happiness. The fact of self-love is thus an unerring pointer to the fact that the self is happiness or bliss in itself.[22]

The self's love for itself is palpable. This is not possible unless the self is bliss as such. Love for other objects is but a means and not an end in itself. Man loves his wife, children and money not for their own sake but for the sake of his own self.[23] They are ancillary accessories which serve the purpose of self-pleasure. Thus it is proved beyond doubt that the *nature of the self is bliss*.

NOTES

1. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.1.
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 3.9.28.
3. P. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, p. 127.
4. *Kalpataru*, N. S., p. 93.
5. *Ābhoga*, Vanivilas Ed. p. 79.
6. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.1.
7. Rāmatīrtha on the *Vedāntasāra*, N.S., p. 64.
8. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.1.
9. It has already been proved that the self or being alone is real and whatever is distinct from it is false. The knowable is not the self-luminous self, *i.e.*, it is distinct from the self. Therefore the knowable is false.
10. *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka*, Ch. 1, *ślokas* 186-188.
11. *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha*, Viz. Ed., p. 229.
12. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.1.
13. Madhusūdana's commentary on the *Gītā*, 2.18.
14. *Vide supra* p. 47
15. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.1.
16. The Naiyāyika and others admit that God is directly aware of all objects in a single knowledge. There is no distinction of time in respect of Him. An eternal Present alone shines forth. From His point of view the temporal process must be envisaged in its completeness as an eternally accomplished act.

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17. *Nyāyamakaranda* and its commentary by Citsukha, pp. 143-145.
18. Madhusūdana's commentary on the *Gītā*, 2.18.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Vivaraṇa*, Viz. Ed., p. 41.
21. *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka*, I. 23
22. *Advaitadīpikā*, Benares Ed., p. 374.
23. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 2.4.5.

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6

SVAPRAKĀŚATVA, SĀKṢIJÑĀNA, AND SĀKṢIN

SUKHARANJAN SAHA

I

It is well known that in his celebrated *Adhyāsabhāṣya* Śaṅkarācārya has made a distinction between the concept of *viṣaya* and that of *viṣayin* and he takes the first as corresponding to not-self and the second to self which is taken by him as of the nature of *cit* or consciousness. The Self or *ātman* is held by him to be identical with Brahman and he regards Brahman as *svayaṁjyoti-svabhāva* (pp. 119-20, Nirnayasagar Edn.). If we substitute '*prakāśa*' for '*jyoti*' in this compound word the expression will read as '*svayaṁ-prakāśa-svabhāva*'. The expression designates Brahman and because of its noted identity with *ātman* the expression may be taken also as the name for *ātman* whose nature or essence (*svabhāva*) consists in consciousness (*jyoti/prakāśa*) that in turn has to be taken as distinct from the object (*aviṣaya*) and, positively speaking, as self-revealing (*svayaṁ-jyoti* or *svaprakāśa*). Thus, though we do not come across the expression '*svaprakāśa*', in Śaṅkara's writings (at least in the more familiar passages), the thought associated with the concept of *svaprakāśatva* is very much Śāṅkarite and the distinguished commentators and other renowned Advaitins are perfectly justified in utilising this concept in giving an account of Śaṅkara's philosophy. In his *Adhyāsabhāṣya* Śaṅkara has, however, explicitly used the word '*sākṣin*' to mean *ātman* particularly in its capacity of that which reveals the internal states of *antaḥkaraṇa*. He thus writes:

evam aham-pratyayinam aśeṣasvapracārasākṣiṇi, etc.

It may be noted here that Śaṅkara treats *ātman* as *sākṣin* when it enlightens the manifold states of *antaḥkaraṇa* which he refers to as *aham-pratyayin* perhaps because the relevant accessible states of *antaḥkaraṇa* appear necessarily as pertaining to '*I*' or *aham*. In the later literature the states of such privileged access have been taken to be ones being revealed in what is called *sākṣi-jñāna*. We presuppose that the concepts of *svaprakāśatva*, *sākṣin* and *sākṣijñāna*

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are related to one another and our attempt in this paper will be to give an analysis of these concepts and to show how they are related.

I begin with Citsukha's definitions of *svaprakāśatva* as given by him in the beginning pages of his work *Tattvapradīpikā*. In the concluding line of his benedictory verses he takes the incarnation *Nṛsiṁha* as *cidātman* and the principle of *cit* is described by him as *svaprakāśa*. *Cidātman* is the only reality or *tattva* on the nature of which he writes his book *Tattvapradīpikā* and its nature, according to him, consists in *svaprakāśatva*. Following the Gautamiya model of philosophising, he first addresses himself to the task of offering an acceptable definition of *svaprakāśatva*, and this he offers at the eleventh instance after considering the claims of ten earlier definitions.

II

The first five definitions he has considered are such that either both or the second one of the components '*sva*' and '*prakāśa*' of the compound word '*svaprakāśa*' find their places in the formulation of the definitions while the remaining definitions do not utilise any of these component words in the body of the definitions. Let us consider the first five definitions first.

The first two definitions are by way of explicating the compound word by offering *vyāsa-vākya* which, as we know, contains the component words only with proper case-endings purporting to show the meaning of the compound word. The first definition treats the compound as an instance of *karmadhāraya-samāsa* and the second as an instance of *ṣaṣṭhītatpuruṣa-samāsa*. The first definition gives the analysis "*svaḥ ca asau prakāśaḥ ca*" while the second gives the analysis "*svasya* (*svayameva*) *prakāśaḥ*". Retaining the Sanskrit components in our rendition we can render the first definition as "The *svaprakāśa* is that which is both *sva* and *prakāśa* in nature;" and the second definition as "The *svaprakāśa* is that *prakāśa* whose revelation is achieved by *sva* (or itself)." Stated freely the first definition asserts that if anything has an identity of its own and is of the nature of revelation then this is *svaprakāśa*. Again, if anything is *svaprakāśa* it is necessary that it has an identity of its own and also that it is of the nature of revelation. Whatever is regarded as *svaprakāśa* in Advaita Vedānta must have in it the features indicated by these two necessary conditions. Cognitions of outer objects, awareness of internal states and the higher principle of *cit* involved in the two have surely these features in them

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and it can be rightly claimed that the definition is not too narrow.

The definition also states that these two conditions are jointly sufficient for anything to be regarded as *svaprakāśa*. We shall at this point refer to a methodological principle presupposed herein. Since the success in offering a philosophical formulatlon of the concept of *svaprakāśatva* is a step towards admitting a thing answering to such a formulation and thus of rejecting other theories about the nature of cognition, we cannot at the outset claim admissibility of the proposition that cognitions which are held to be *paraprakāśya*, that is, to be of a nature opposed to *svaprakāśa* are non-entities. And if the point is granted, then what is offered as the sufficient condition in the definition should not be such that it is present in anything other than the definiens. This is exactly what happens in the case of the first definition, for the cognition of objects called *vyāvasāya* in the Nyāya system is held to be itself an object of an introspective after-cognition, though it is conceived to have an identity of its own and is of the nature of revelation as it is believed to reveal an external object. The definition is thus too wide and is dismissed as untenable. Let us see whether the second definition is acceptable. It asserts that a *svaprakāśa* thing is of the nature of revelation and that it reveals itself as well in addition to the outside objects it reveals. The definition thus envisages that the *revealer* can be the *revealed* without postulating any additional after-cognition envisaged in Nyāya. According to the definition, then, the *svaprakāśa* is the self-revealed revelation and this view of *svaprakāśatā* is attributed to the Buddhist philosophers who are believed to have dispensed with the theory of self as the owner of states of consciousness. The implication of the definition on such a view is then that the thing that reveals and the thing that is being revealed is the same. Linguistically speaking, the referent of the nominative of the verb 'reveal' (or its equivalent) and that of the word that is the object to this verb become identical. But this goes against the semantic rule that these two have necessarily to be distinct from each other. Since the rule has to be accepted for other verbs, we cannot make an exception here, and what is being stipulated in the definition cannot be true of anything whatsoever. The definition thus suffers from the defect called *asambhava*.

The third definition utilises the component '*prakāśā*' only and it does not attempt to give the meaning of *svaprakāśatva* by an analysis of the compound word with the help of any explicating

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sentence as was done by the earlier two definitions. The strategy seems to identify a description that will apply to cognitions admitted as capable of being revealed by an after-cognition and then to offer the opposite of this as the definition of *svaprakāśatva*. Thus, in Nyāya philosophy *vyavasāya* or primary cognition of objects is taken to be capable of being revealed in an after (*anu*) cognition (*vyavasāya*)—the two being of the nature of revelation but with this distinction that the primary cognition is only about objects while the after-cognition is about the primary cognition also. If for this reason *vyavasāya* is held to be *paraprakāśya*, what is held to be *svaprakāśya* must be such that it does not attract the description and also that whatever fails to attract such a description must be regarded as *svaprakāśa*. But if cognition alone as conceived in Advaita is to be taken as *svaprakāśa* the definition is clearly too wide in respect of lamps and other similar sources of light. For though we require a lamp for a view of objects we do not require a second lamp for a view of the first lamp. Therefore, a lamp cannot be said to be capable of being revealed by anything similar to it. If, however, such an object is held to be *svaprakāśa*, the definition can also be said to be applicable to material objects which are admittedly *paraprakāśya* and therefore non-*svāprakāśa*. Thus, an earthen jar does not have anything of its kind which can reveal the jar and hence it cannot be said to be capable of being revealed by another of its kind. What does in fact reveal the jar, be that light from any source or a cognition, is necessarily distinct in kind from the jar. The definition might be defended by arguing that the *cognition* that reveals the jar is similar to it in respect of the pervading universal of existence. The phrase that is taken here to qualify *cognition* will be 'similar (to its object) in respect of the universal of existence'. But this will be absolutely redundant inasmuch as the bare noun and the noun delimited by this qualifying phrase will have the same denotation. If thus we drop this stipulation regarding similarity, the definition will indeed be a different (and also an untenable) definition.

The fourth definition is a negative definition like the preceding one. It is thus held that a material object or its cognition (as it is conceived in the Nyāya system) is such that there is at least one moment during the phases of its existence when it remains unrevealed. And if such things are to be excluded it can certainly be tempting to believe that if anything is such that it cannot be said of it that there is at least one moment during the phases

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of its existence when it remains unrevealed, then that thing will be *svaprakāśa*. But pleasure, pain and similar other properties which are held in Advaita Vedānta as lacking any moment of unrevealed existence, would easily pass as *svaprakāśa* according to this definition. These are not however treated as falling within the purview of the definition and it thus becomes too wide in respect of such properties.

The fifth definition utilises both the component words '*sva*' and '*prakāśa*', but it uses '*sva*' in association with '*vyavahāra*'. The definition in Sanskrit is: *svavyāvahārahetu-prakāśatvam*. It means: anything which is a cause in respect of its *vyavahāra* and which is of the nature of revelation *is svaprakāśa*. The word '*vyavahāra*' is a homonym and may stand for anyone of (a) linguistic expression (*śabdaprayoga*), (b) direct cognition (*abhijñā*), (c) giving away (*hāna*) and (d) receiving (*upādāna*). Taking linguistic expression (a) as the meaning of '*vyavahāra*' the definition can be understood as asserting: anything which is a cause in respect of a statement about it and which is of the nature of revelation is *svaprakāśa* (and conversely). Thus, by mentioning its object we can easily make a statement about a cognition. In respect of such a statement this cognition itself (and not any after-cognition about it) is a causal condition and since it is a cognition about the object it is certainly of the nature of revelation. It thus merits the description contained in the definition. But taking advantage of the ambiguity of the word '*vyavahāra*' and thus treating the word as standing for direct cognition, one might claim that a lamp which shows objects to us and is thus of the nature of revelation is very much a causal condition in respect of its own perception; for if it were not there this direct cognition would not have taken place at all. It is thus clear that the lamp which is a material object and is not considered to fall within the scope of the definition is something of which the definition becomes true. But this will make the definition too wide. This contingency can be avoided, however, if the word '*jñāna*' is substituted in place of the word '*sva*' in the definition. For no lamp can be said to be a causal condition in respect of any *vyavahāra* (no matter in what specific sense it is taken) about any *jñāna* or cognition But the move will make the definition vulnerable to a new charge of too wide definition, though the move may save it from the older charge. Thus, according to the Nyāya system, a primary cognition or *vyavasāya* is a causal condition in respect of the introspective after-cognition

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or *anuvyavasāya* about it. This after-cognition which is of the nature of direct intuition can very well be regarded as an instance of *vyavahāra* if we choose to opt for the second meaning noted earlier. Primary cognition or *vyavasāya* which is of the nature of revelation is thus a causal condition in respect of the direct cognition (*vyavahāra*) about a cognition (*jñāna*). This, certainly, is not permissible.

We shall at this point skip over a few definitions and take up the ninth definition because of its similarity with the fifth definition. In Sanskrit it runs as '*svapratibaddhavyavahāre sajātīyaparānapekṣatvam*' and retaining the Sanskrit word '*vyavahāra*' in our rendition because of its ambiguity, we can render it as: anything that does not stand in need of any other thing of its kind in respect of any *vyavahāra* about itself is *svaprakāśa* in nature. If what has been said in course of the explanation of the fifth definition is kept in mind we can easily understand why the definition can be said to apply to the proper instances of *svaprakāśatva* and not to any *paraprakāśya* cognition, cognition, for example, to *vyavasāya* of the Nyāya system. But taking linguistic expression as the meaning of the word, *vyavahāra*, it can never be claimed that a second lamp or a second pot is necessary for any *vyavahāra* in respect of a given lamp or a given pot though its cognition is certainly necessary for such *vyavahāra*. This makes the definition too wide. The defender of the definition may argue that this cognition is similar to its object in respect of the generic universal of existence and thus the definition does not apply to any lamp or pot. But his move will have disastrous consequences for the definition. For, *adṛṣṭa* which is considered necessary for any sort of effect is a causal condition in respect of any sort of *vyavahāra* about cognition that may be taken to be an instance of *svaprakāśatva*. Now, as this *adṛṣṭa* is similar in kind to such a *svaprakāśa* thing in respect of the universal of existence the definition will not apply to any instance of *svaprakāśatva*.

Let us pause here to enlist the things which have been mentioned as falling outside the scope of the definiens in course of the consideration of the six definitions covered so far. Material things which can be objects of our cognitions cannot therefore be regarded as *svaprakāśa*. Though in a loose sense the lamp or any other source of light can be regarded as *svaprakāśa*, it cannot be so regarded in the strict sense; for it is after all a material thing which can very well be an object of our cognition. Even internal pro-

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perties like pleasure and pain cannot be regarded as *svaprakāśa*, perhaps because of their non-cognitive nature, that is, perhaps because they do not reveal any object to us. It is thus easy to see why the Advaitins regard only cognitions as *svaprakāśa*. But the first two definitions warn us against accepting the Naiyāyika's cognition or the Buddhist's cognition as *svaprakāśa* because both of them are conceived as objects — the former of another cognition and the latter of itself. If, however, we seek an in-depth explanation of why the Advaitin's cognition and not the Naiyāyika's or the Buddhist's cognition can be regarded as *svaprakāśa*, we shall have to offer an analysis of the Advaita theory of cognition. As a preparation for that, Citsukha offers the fifth, sixth and seventh definitions which show to us how and in what sense cognitions can be regarded as objects of further cognitions. He then proceeds to show in what other sense they cannot be regarded as objects and therefore as *svaprakāśa*. In our opinion if such an analysis were not his motivation, he could have avoided the charges brought against the fourth definition by a little modification, if logically valid definition were his only aim. Thus, Citsukha could have defined the *svaprakāśa* as that (a) which reveals an object but does not reveal itself as an object, and (b) which cannot be said to remain unrevealed during any of the moments of its existence. The clause (b) represents the fourth definition and the clause (a) makes it inapplicable to pleasure or any other similar state or to cognition as it has been represented in the second definition. Citsukha is a creative thinker and he has followed a different course which is philosophically illuminating for an analysis of the concept of *svaprakāśatva* and other relevant ones. The next section is devoted to the remaining definitions of *svaprakāśatva* by Citsukha.

III

The sixth definition states that the *svaprakāśa* is 'not an object of any cognition' (*jñānaviṣayatvam...*) and this constitutes a part of the seventh and also of the eighth definition. The seventh definition adds the clause 'that which is *aparokṣa*' and the total definition states that the *svaprakāśa* is (a) not an object of any cognition, and (b) is *aparokṣa* in nature and conversely. The eighth definition retains the clause (a) but substitutes 'can be an object of *vyavahāra*, (presumably in the sense of linguistic expression) in place of the clause (b) of the seventh definition. The eighth definition in its entirety states that the *svaprakāśa* is (a) not an object

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of any cognition, and (b) is an object of a statement about it.

The sixth definition cannot be accepted as true if the phrase 'object of a cognition' is understood in its usual meaning. For the scriptures speak of Brahman and its nature and also of the relationship in which Brahman stands related to *ātman*. Therefore, we have knowledge based on the testimony of the scripture in respect of the *svaprakāśa*; it follows that the *śvaprakāśa* can be an object of testimonial knowledge. Furthermore, one of the utilities of an acceptable definition is that the defining property can be used as a mark for inferring that the *lakṣya* which has that property is different from all other things that lack that property. In other words, we can prove of any and every cognition that it is distinct from non-*svaprakāśa* things because it has that defining property. If this be so, the *svaprakāśa* (which includes cognitions) also can be the object of inferential knowledge. Moreover, Citsukha himself is trying hard to come up with an acceptable definition and it is naturally expected of him that he will have to offer arguments for proving the thesis of *svaprakāśatva* in respect of cognitions, for he is engaged in a debate with the philosophically formidable opponents like the Naiyāyika or the Buddhist who hold different views. This criticism of the sixth definition implies that the definition does not really apply to any *svaprakāśa* thing whatsoever. One might say that the phrase 'object of cognition' stands for a thing the word for which can be used in the accusative case in association with the verb 'to cognise', 'to believe', 'to know' or any other equivalent verb. In this restricted sense cognition cannot be regarded as an object of cognition because the word that is used in the accusative case in relation to the verb 'to cognise' or any other equivalent verb is never any derivative from such a verb. Understood in this way the clause (a) of the seventh or of the eighth definition is certainly different from the sixth definition. But does this modification make the later definitions free from defects? Keeping in mind the intention behind as well as the criticism of the sixth definition we cannot treat the clause (b) of the seventh definition, *viz.*, '*aparokṣa* in nature' as an object of *aparokṣa* or perceptual cognition. For though the *svaprakāśa* can be an object of testimonial or inferential knowledge, the *svaprakāśa* will not be claimed by the Advaitins as a perceptible object about which we can have perceptual cognition as it is ordinarily understood. Nor can it be said that a *svaprakāśa* cognition is necessarily *aparokṣa* in the sense that it is perceptual in nature, because non-

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perceptual cognitions would cease to be regarded as *svaprakāśa* on such an interpretation. It is therefore suggested that the word '*aparokṣa*' be understood as that regarding which the person concerned is not in doubt or illusion. But this strategy fails to save the definition which becomes too wide since it applies to self as it is understood in the Prābhākara system of philosophy. The Prābhākaras regard self as the *kartā* (agent of actions) and *bhoktā* (enjoyer of pleasure and pain); but on the Advaita view self is not so. Therefore, even though self in Advaita is regarded as *svaprakāśa*, for the Prābhākara self is not so because of the difference noted. But according to the Prābhākara theory of *tripuṭī-saṁvit* the word for the self, *i.e.*, '*aham*' ('I') is used as the nominative and not as the accusative in association of the verb 'to know' and it will not be permitted that one is in doubt or illusion in respect of self. The eighth definition also does not fare better, because it is applicable to the relation apppearing as obtaining between the shell and silver in the illusory context as it is understood in the Prābhākara system of philosophy. Unlike the philosophers of the other schools the Prābhākaras hold that what passes for illusion is no single cognition grasping a relation between two items, say, between the shell (appearing as *This*) and silver, though they agree that the expression that is used for representing the so-called illusion looks like a sentence ("This is silver") which is amenable to the interpretation that the sentence is not only about the items *this* (shell) and *silver* but also about their relationship. This relationship is thus conceived in the Prābhākara system as something about which a sentence can be used though no cognition grasping it does really take place. But this relationship is not certainly an instance of *svaprakāśatva*.

Citsukha now offers the tenth definition which is developed into the eleventh one with a little modification and defends it against all possible criticisms. The tenth definition runs as follows in Sanskrit:

Def. 10: (a) *avedyatve sati*
(b) *aparokṣa-vyavahāraviṣayatvam*

He substitutes

Def. 11: (b) *aparokṣavyavahāra-yogyatvam*

in place of (b) of the tenth definition. Let us reproduce below the seventh and the eighth definitions in Sanskrit.

Def. 7: (a) *jñānaviṣayatve sati*
(b) *aparokṣatvam*

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Def. 8: (a) *vyavahāraviṣayatve sati*
(b) *jñānaviṣayatvam*

Notice that 7(a) and 8(b) are identical and looks similar in meaning to 10(a). Furthermore, 7(b) and 8(a) have been punched into 10(b), for the first component of 10(b) is the same as 7(b) and the second one is the same as 8(a). If the clauses in Def. 10 are understood exactly in the way they were understood in the seventh or eighth definition, the tenth definition will be subject to at least some of the charges enlisted earlier. Citsukha has given us his ideas on the meaning of 10(a) that is, of the concept of *avedyatva* though ordinarily we shall treat it as having the meaning of Def. 6 or 7 (a) or 8 (b). And herein lies the creative insight of Citsukha as will become evident when we take up the discussion of the concept. But before we do that let us first see how Citsukha defends the definitions against charges not connected with this concept.

Retaining the Sanskrit words '*avedya*' and '*aparokṣa*' we can translate the tenth and eleventh definitions thus:

Def. 10: That which is *avedya* and *is actually* the object of a linguistic statement attributing *aparokṣatva* to it is *svaprakāśa*.

Def. 11: That which is *avedya* and *is capable* of being the object of a linguistic statement attributing *aparokṣatva* to it is *svaprakāśa*.

The tenth definition will not apply to *ātman* as understood in Advaita Vedānta when during the state of deep sleep, swoon, dissolution or liberation *ātman* is not actually an object of such a statement. But if the necessary changes as suggested in the eleventh definition are made then *ātman* can be regarded to be *svaprakāśa* according to this definition as it *was* actually an object of such a statement previously. Capability implies present absence in the capable of that thing which was or will be actual in it in the past or in the future. Understood this way *ātman* can very well be regarded as *svaprakāśa* because during a prior or posterior state *ātman* was or will be an object of such a statement. One might say that this capability is a property and to say that *ātman*, which in its essential nature is conceived as devoid of any property, can have such a property is to contradict the basic tenet of monism (*advaita*). But capability need not be understood as a property of such an *ātman*. The capable may be understood, following the Vaiśeṣika construal of *guṇavattā*, as the locus of otherness (*bheda*) which is

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nothing additional (*atirikta*) to the nature (*svarūpa*) of the locus. Thus, the capable here is that which is distinct from the locus of absolute non-existence of that of which the capable is capable. The Vaiśeṣika definition of substance as that which possesses qualities is rightly held to be too narrow in respect of a created substance for in the first moment of such a substance no quality has yet emerged in it. For obviating the charge the definition has been modified in the system thus: the substance is that which is distinct from the locus of absolute non-existence of qualities. Similarly for obviating the charge of too narrow definition against the eleventh definition in respect of *ātman* at least during the state of liberation when even appearance of *dvaita* vanishes, the Advaitin also can suggest that: that which is distinct from the locus of absolute non-existence of *aparokṣavyavahārayogyatā* is *svaprakāśa*. Thus, even if it is conceded that capability (*yogyatva*) is a property and that *ātman* is devoid of any property at least during the state of liberation, we can say that the liberated *ātman* is distinct from the locus of the absolute non-existence of the capability under consideration. Though during the state of deep sleep or swoon the non-liberated *ātman* is not actually the object of the kind of linguistic expression under reference in the context of tenth/eleventh definition, it can be such an object during the waking state. Therefore, the non-liberated *ātman* can be regarded as the locus of the property of capability under reference. Since the liberated *ātman* is identical with the non-liberated *ātman*, it can rightly be claimed that the liberated *ātman*, too, is distinct from the locus of the absolute non-existence of the capability under reference, as the non-liberated *ātman* is the locus of this capability. One might however point out that the Advaitin's *ātman*, no matter whether it is liberated or not, cannot be the locus of any property and therefore of the property of capability under reference. In other words, the non-liberated *ātman*, too, is the locus of the absolute non-existence of every property. And if this be the case, the definition would be clearly fallacious. But in reply to the point it has been argued by Citsukha that many of the direct disciples of Śaṅkara (such as Sureśvara and Padmapāda) concede that *ātman* can be said to have properties though such properties are only imaginary and not real properties of *ātman*. And the same would be the status here of the property of capability under reference. The eleventh definition is not thus really vulnerable to the defects raised by the critics. After having cleared the definition

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this way, Citsukha explains the utility of the constituent clauses of the definition and in the process raises many good philosophical problems and offers his solution to them. We pass on to the next section for an idea of the issues involved.

IV

Let us recall that the eleventh definition states that the *svaprakāśa* is that (a) which is *avedya* and (b) which is capable of being the object of linguistic statement attributing *aparokṣatva* to it. Each of the constituents is necessary for defining the *svaprakāśa* and if anyone of them is dropped the definition would be too wide inasmuch as taken singly each of the two descriptions would be true of some non-*svaprakāśa* thing or other. Thus, if the first clause is dropped and the *svaprakāśa* is defined with the help of the second clause alone, the definition would be too wide in respect of objects like tables and chairs. For, we can have perceptual or non-mediate (*a-parokṣa*) cognition about them and for this reason such objects can be regarded as perceptible and we would be justified in making statements attributing *aparokṣatva* to them. Similarly, if the second clause is dropped and the definition is offered only with the help of the first clause, the definition would be too wide in respect of the *avedya* things like the future and the imperceptible objects like *dharma* and *adharma* — the word '*avedya*' is understood negatively here as standing for things not capable of being objects of perceptual cognitions. It should be noticed that the first clause is not true of the things shown here as those of which the second clause is true. Similarly, the second clause is not true of the things understood here as those of which the first clause is true. Not only each of the clauses is severally true of the *svaprakāśas* but also the two are jointly true of the *svaprakāśa* only and not of any other thing. But is this claim really justified? It is pointed that both the clauses are jointly true of the things admitted in the Advaita system itself as objects of *sākṣijñāna*. Let us explain the charge in some detail.

The Advaitins generally support the thesis of three-term realtionship in the cognitive situation. The terms are (i) the object, (ii) the *filming* mode of *antaḥkaraṇa* or of *avidyā*, and (iii) the enlightening principle of consciousness that enlightens the filming mode and reveals the objects. Thus, what acts as the mediating factor in such a situation is this filming mode and nothing can be said to have been cognised without being covered (*vyāpya*) by such a mode (*vṛtti*). Therefore, according to the Advaitin's representa-

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tionalism, every cognitive object is *vṛtti-vyāpya* or covered by a filming medium. But not all such objects are revealed in the same way by the enlightening principle. According to Advaita metaphysics, nothing other than Brahman is real and Brahman is *ātman* whose essence consists in consciousness. What we normally take to be real is not really so but only appears to be so in a sort of cosmic illusion. And these appearances are treated to be enduring in nature — the implication being that such an illusion stays with us as a disposition till we come to know Brahman in its essential nature. Empirically speaking then, in spite of the fact that all appearances endure in Brahman because they are its appearances and that they are related to consciousness which is the essence of Brahman, for a given person at a given time all the multifarious appearances are not objects of his empirical knowledge, and we can say that he is ignorant of the vast majority of them. When, however, he comes to achieve knowledge of any such thing his ignorance is removed and what removes his ignorance is the mechanism of *pramāṇa*. This removal is secured by a *vṛtti* or mode of *antaḥkaraṇa* generated by the *pramāṇa* mechanism. But in cases of *antaḥkaraṇavṛtti* generated by the sense-organ there is a coalescence between the object filmed and the mode of *antaḥkaraṇa*, because the filming agent (i) reaches out to the object through the sense-organ if the object is stationed outside, or (ii) is related to the object which is in contact with the sense-organ stationed in the body.

Whatever be the station of the object or of the filming mode in other situations, in the situation of perceptual knowledge under reference the respective stations are the same. Now, what makes one an individual knower is certainly the principle of consciousness but it is this principle as associated with that person's *antaḥkaraṇa* (a brain - like fine material substance) which is related physically to the person's body and his sense-organs. Empirical knowledge takes place when the enlightening principle of consciousness as associated with the person's *antaḥkaraṇa* enlightens the filming mode and reveals the object. But in the situation of perceptual knowledge, the consciousness in which external things endure as appearances in a sort of cosmic illusion coalesces, to put it figuratively, with the principle of consciousness as associated with the person's *antaḥkaraṇa*. When consciousness as associated with *antaḥkaraṇa* only reveals the object, the situation is that of mediate knowledge and in such a situation the object cannot be

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said to have been revealed vividly in all its richness or wealth of details. In the jargon of Advaita Vedānta, in the situation of mediate (*parokṣa*) knowledge only the *asattāpādaka* ignorance gets removed and *abhānāpādaka* ignorance continues. But in the situation of perceptual knowledge the revealer is the consciousness as associated with the object (which has coalesced with the consciousness as associated with the person's *antaḥkaraṇa*). Because of this difference in the revealer the object is revealed vividly with a wealth of details which is missing in the other type of context and both the types of ignorance about the object mentioned earlier get removed. This vividness is achieved through the enlightening of the filming mode by the object consciousness. This is described in Advaita terminology as *phalavyāpyatā*.

By treating '*phala*' as representing vividness in revelation we can say that the object of perceptual knowledge is not only covered by the filming mode of *antaḥkaraṇa* but also gets revealed vividly because it is here directly within the focus of consciousness in which it is based and endures. It is thus understandable why the imperceptible qualities of *dharma* and *adharma* is only *vṛtti-vyāpya* and not *phalavyāpya*. The component '*avedya*' of the eleventh definition is equivalent to not-*phalavyāpya*. Unlike *dharma* and *adharma*, tables and chairs are *phalavyāpya* and *aparokṣavyavahārayogya*. And unlike tables and chairs, *dharma* and *adharma* are not-*phalavyāpya* and not-*aparokṣavyāvahāra-yogya*. But unlike *dharma adharma*, the *svaprakāśa* is *aprokṣavyavahārayogya*, and unlike tables and chairs it is not-*phalavyāpya*. We have explained earlier why the two clauses of the definition are jointly true of the *svaprakāśa* and not of any of the two sets of other things, though one clause is true of one such set of things and the other clause of the other set of objects. We have explained here the same point again after offering an explication of some of the philosophical points involved. We are yet to explain why both the caluses can be shown to be true of (non-*svaprakāśa*) objects of *sākṣijñana*. We now offer an analysis of the charge in the background of the foregoing explanation.

We enlist below a few examples of immediate experience.

(a) I am ignorant and do not know (the nature of) myself and others.
(b) I do not know the thing you speak of.
(c) I am happy/in pain/afraid.
(d) I desire/will.

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(e) This is silver (illusory cognition).

(f) There is no silver (Correcting cognition interpreted as about the non-existence of the *prātibāsika* silver).

Notice that (e) and (f) do not involve any reference to 'I'. But the ignorance which is at the basis of the illusion in the form of (e) may be taken to be manifest in an experience of ignorance regarding the nature of the shell and this manifestation does involve reference to 'I'. When at the advent of knowledge about the shell the person's ignorance regarding it disappears, it wraps up the illusory projection of silver while disappearing. Ignorance involves reference to 'I' inasmuch as '*I do not know*' accomapnies all enjoyment of ignorance as would be evident from (a) and (b). This analysis is similar to the Kantian analysis of transcendental apperception. In my opinion, the substantial thesis of the Advaita theory of *svaprakāśatva*, so far as the knowledge situation is concerned, is that '*I know*' accompanies all my representation. But Advaita transcends Kantianism in holding that *I do not know* accompanies every enjoyment of ignorance no matter in what form that enjoyment is encoded. Furthermore, disappearance of ignorance will not be noticed if knowledge results without any illusion intervening between ignorance and knowledge except in the form *I know* which is contrary to *I do not know*. But when knowledge corrects illusion *I know* should be taken as involved here also in an implicit judgment like 'I know that silver is non-existent here'; the non-existence being of the illusory silver should itself be regarded as of the nature of *prātibhāsikatva* under which silver is assimilated, though being in an objectual attitude and keeping parity with the form of the corrected experience the person drops *I know that* and states only the remaining part.

If our analysis appears reasonable it can be claimed then that 'I' is the link among knowledge, ignorance, and illusion and doubt where they are involved. But 'I' serves as linkage in a different way also. When a person knows a thing to be of a kind and remembers to have derived pleasure or pain in contact with such a thing, he will intend to either acquire or avoid it and will act accordingly. His action will lead to acquisition or avoidance leading to his pleasure, or to non-acquisition, or non-avoidance leading to pain. In all these processes involving cognition, conation and affection 'I' necessarily figures in experience like *I know, I desire, I will, I am happy, I am in pain,* etc. a few of which have

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been represented in (c) and (d) above. The non-'I' components which are predicates attribute to 'I' certain poperties. Thus 'know' attributes cognitive states, 'desire' and 'will' conative states, and 'am happy' and 'am in pain' attribute affective states to the substratum. Conceived as the substratum of such properties the referent of 'I' is called the *jīva* in Advaita. But the important point to be noted here is that we cannot prefix *I know* to these experiences for it will be not only philosophically but also linguistically not permissible to allow *I know that I know*, *I know that I desire*, *I know that I will*, *I know that I am happy* and *I know that I am in pain*. Even Wittgenstein in the other tradition dismisses the last of our noted expressions as nonsensical. But what should be the explanations of this oddity?

I would suggest that the single occurrence of 'I' in our earlier basic statements should be construed in two ways— one representing *jīvahood* which corresponds roughly to the phenomenal self in Kant, and the other representing the *sākṣihood* as involved in the *sākṣijñāna* and this may relate to the apperceptive subject (and not to noumenal self) in Kant. The Advaita explanation of the oddity in question, according to my understanding, is as follows. *I know that I am in pain* would have been permissible if we could also allow that *I do not know whether I am in pain*. This can be argued for other cases also. If thus ignorance is not possible in such cases knowledge (*pramājñāna*) also is not permissible here — the implication being that we are not required here to requisition the mechanism of *pramāṇa*. But it is undeniable that these directly accessible states are surely such that they are capable of being objects of linguistic expressions attributing *aparokṣatva* to them. In spite of this *aparokṣatva* these are not *phala-vyāpya* in the sense explained earlier, since, according to Advaita, no sense-organ can be shown to be involved in the awareness of these states. In other words, these are not-*vedya* and *aparokṣavyavahārayogya*; the two clauses of the definition are true of such things which are not *svaprakāśa*. Citsukha avoids the charge of too wide definition in this context by holding that the clause *aparokṣavyavahārayogya* should be construed as that about which we can say that it is *aparokṣa* and is really so. Publicly observable objects can be objects of perceptual knowledge generated by sensory contact and they thus predate their knowledge and are certainly real. But the *sākṣibhāsya* objects do not predate their awareness and are not capable of being objects of perceptual knowledge generated by

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sensory contact. The *sākṣin* which is certainly *svaprakāśa* is held to be so because it is taken as representing unity of consciousness and thus it predates and sustains all representations.

The internal states are held to be *aparokṣa* because of trafficking between the *sākṣin* and the *jīva* through 'I'. In revealing the *jīva*, the *sākṣin* also reveals its states. From my presentation it has perhaps been evident that I would not favour the idea that the filming mode involved in knowledge or illusion situation is *svaprakāśa*. It is only the enlightening *sākṣin* which is to be regarded so. I shall conclude by reacting to a vulgar argument against the thesis of *svaprakāśatva*. It is sometime argued that the judgment by which we often express our knowledge is only about objects, and it is thus unreasonable to claim that knowledge is necessarily reflexive in character as *I know* is missing in such cases. I would say that if I am in an objectual attitude I shall make statements about the objects only. But when I am free I can easily recollect that I saw or heard this and that, or I believed or doubted or could know that... if only I so wish. Thus even if empirical corroboration of prefixing of *I know* or the like is missing in some cases this recollection by the *sākṣin* will certainly justify in postulating that such prefixing was noticed by the subject perhaps in a very dim manner. R. M. Chisholm has made a distinction between self-presenting and self-presented states. If his view is compared to the Nyāya theory of *anu-vyavasāya* and he is understood to have unnoticed or unpresented self-presenting states we would beg to differ from him. But if his self-presenting and non-self-presented state is taken to correspond to the type of dim representation of our model we would not hesitate to record our appreciation for his views.

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7

IS THE INDIVIDUAL SELF ILLUSORY?

S. K. SEN

Professor K. C. Bhattacharya, in a paper entitled "The Advaita and its Spiritual Significance,"[1] has made the following remarks:

> The illusoriness of the individual self is apparently the central notion of Advaita Vedanta. Every vital tenet of the philosophy (Brahman, Maya, Ishvara, Moksha)[2]... may be regarded as an elaboration of this single notion... As we are, it is only in faith that we accept the illusoriness of our individuality. Vedanta starts with the notion of *adhyāsa* (false-identification of the self and the body)[3] and presupposes an experience of spiritual detachment from the body..... The individual self means the self embodied...; and the illusoriness of the embodiment is the illusoriness of the body itself... . The spiritual consciousness of one's illusory individuality is the explicit consciousness of the contradiction of the self having been believed as not-self.

The aim of this paper is to understand and examine the position adumbrated in these assertions.

Bhattacharya has not spelt out why he regards illusoriness of the individual self as *prima facie* the main idea in Advaita. We have therefore to reconstruct speculatively his reason for saying so. In classical Indian philosophy, determination of the nature of the Self can truly be regarded as a matter of central concern. For liberation, which is held to be the highest goal, is supposed to be unattainable without the knowledge of the Self. This is patently so in the doctrines of Sāṅkhya-Yoga and Advaita. Other orthodox systems and some heterodox systems like Buddhism and Jainism also subscribe to it in their own ways.

Human suffering (and not mere curiosity) has been said to be the primary stimulant of philosophical quest in India. The

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motive of the *darśanas* is practical. The search here is for a remedy that would put an end to suffering totally and forever. The doubt that the search may be chimerical does not stop man from making the attempt. Liberation at its minimum is conceived as the complete cessation of *duḥkha*. This goal cannot be achieved by adoption of ordinary means such as taking of medicine, being careful, etc. It requires an intelligent inquiry into the root of suffering. As the root is found to lie not in external nature but in the sufferer's inner constitution, the search gradually focuses on to the nature of the Self.

According to Advaita man suffers because of his ignorance and self-forgetfulness. If he knew his real nature, he would be free. For his real nature is all bliss — beyond all suffering. He is in truth Brahman — the differenceless Absolute of Existence-Consciousness-Blis (*sat-cit-ānanda*). But in the worldly life this knowledge is eclipsed and man's true nature obfuscated into that of an embodied being. This embodied being is the individual self that is said to be illusory.

The dispelling of the illusion involves the realisation of the individual's identity with Brahman. Therefore an enquiry into the nature of Brahman is initiated. But this enquiry presupposes the conviction of the individual of his imperfection. So, in point of procedure the tenet of the illusoriness of the individual self precedes that of Brahman as the sole reality. Brahman has no reference to individual selves by way of denial. Rather, the denial of individuality implies the non-dual reality of Brahman.

The individual self is a product of *māyā* — an entity (postulated in Advaita) which is called "indescribable" because it cannot be regarded either as real or as unreal. Ontologically therefore, the *jīva* (individual self) cannot be prior to *māyā*. But man is aware of himself and of his existence much before he tries, if at all, to understand *māyā*. In fact, it is dissatisfaction with his own condition that leads man into the theoretical enterprise that is called *darśana*. The concept of *māyā* is an abstruse philosophical one which is propounded in order to explain the miserable condition of man-in-ignorance, and hence cannot precede the knowledge of that condition. The concept of illusoriness of the individual self, therefore, is epistemologically prior to that of *māyā*

Mokṣa, like *bandha* (bondage), is of the *jīva*. There is no question of bondage or liberation in regard to Brahman. Libera-

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tion relates to the individual self and its bondage. In fact, according to Advaita, bondage consists in individuality, which is illusory and unreal.

Liberation is attained by the shedding of this illusory individuality. The concept of *mokṣa* as infinitude, therefore, can be obtained by elaboration of the concept of the falsity of finitude or individuality of man.

Man finds himself thrown in the world. He does not know where he has come from. Nor does he regard himself as the creator of the world, which he takes as alien to him. The material world is a field for man's experiences (*bhoga*). Īśvara or God is conceived as the Lord of the universe. Man conceives God in his own image Man has very meagre potency and very limited knowledge; God is omniscient and omnipotent. Man manufactures petty things; God is the creator or manifestor of the universe. The world is the scene of man's joys and sorrows, which result from his actions. God is thus regarded as the one who is the dispenser of the consequences of human actions. Being the master of *māyā*, He is free from illusion. He is also regarded as infinitely merciful — to whom human beings can look up to for being guided out of the snare of illusion and worldliness. All this is said only to bring home the point that the concept of Īśvara is related to that of *jīva*. Man formulates the concept of God in contrast to his conception of himself. So, in a way, even the notion of God can be said to be elaborated out of the notion of the individual self.

How does one conceive or understand that the individual self is illusory? In normal circumstances this thought never crosses the mind. It might even appear absurd to say "I am illusory" like saying "I do not exist" or "I am unconscious". The conception therefore is not the result of any normal experience or even of any normal attempt to be clear about the nature of one's own being. Reality, rather than illusoriness of individuality, is presupposed in the attempt. Unreality of the individual could possibly be a conviction generated by some supersensuous revelation or experience. But since supersensuous experience of the sort is out of reach for all except a rare few, in philosophical discussion of the question we cannot proceed on the assumption of such experience.

The concept of falsity of the individual self is suggested or asserted in Advaita and, for people having respect for Advaita, it

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is initially accepted in faith, to be verified by realisation later. But what is accepted on faith has to be in some way conceivable, even if vaguely. An inconceivable or impossible thing cannot be an object of faith. For then faith would be acquiescence in contradiction and the refusal to think. In philosophy, we do not take that attitude. So, even to be accepted on faith, we have to see if there is any experience in normal life which might seem to point to the possibility of illusoriness of individuality as such.

According to Advaita, the subject (consciousness) and the object are two diametrically opposite things and their combination or identity is an impossibility. Individuality (of the self) involves a combination of subject and object, of consciousness and body. Normally, a contradiction does not appear in experience. Nobody, for example, ever experiences a circle that is a square. But K. C. Bhattacharya seems to maintain that in the case of the individual self, what is theoretically impossible (the self being not-self) is yet a fact of spiritual experience. It is on this account that the illusoriness of individuality is not merely a matter of doctrinaire faith but also has some support in experience.

Such an experience, according to Bhattacharya, is involved in moral repentance. In it our past being is felt "as apparently at once subjective and objective, at once as *I* and *me*" (which is an intellectual absurdity). Here "one is aware of the self," says Bhattacharya, "not only as a thing of the past, alienated or objectified, out as still tingling with subjectivity... a contradiction that yet appears." He further says, "The notions of the individual self, of the individuality or me as false, and of the eternal self as the I that is never me, are born in one and the same spiritual consciousness."[4]

Bhattacharya's above analysis of repentance as involving awareness of the individual self as a contradiction is, to say the least, as startling as it is unconvincing. Repentance, it may be contended, far from involving disavowal of the past self, rather implies the continuity of the same self. To repent is to own responsibility for action. I can repent only what I have done. In what way this means alienation of my past being is not clear. Nor is it very clear why the past self, conceived as the doer of a disapproved action, should be regarded as objective (not-self). If the self could be turned into an object in this way, then even the fact or act of self-consciousness itself would render the self a not-self, at least in part. It is equally difficult to understand why,

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even if such reflexivity or subtle objectivity[5] is admitted, the individual self should be illusory or false.

Advaita starts with the notion of *adhyāsa*. It points out that though there cannot be any relation between the subject and the object or between either and the properties of the other, yet all empirical knowledge and conduct are based on confusion and false identification of the two.[6] Thus such statements as "I am lean," "I am walking," "I am blind," "I am healthy," "I own a house" etc. all involve mixing up self and not-self. For the self, being pure consciousness, cannot be lean or stout, walking or standing, blind or seeing, healthy or unhealthy, etc., because these are states or conditions of the body.

Wholesale condemnation of all empirical knowledge and behaviour on the part of the Advaitin may seem to be an obstinacy. In appropriate circumstances the statements mentioned above can obviously be true. Man is an embodied being, not a disembodied spirit. In certain contexts of speech and activity he regards himself as identified with the body, though in other contexts he also takes himself as different from the body. This means that what I take to be my self does not remain invariant. Detachment from body as well as identification with body are both possible. But Advaita would have nothing of subject-object combination. The individual self is called illusory simply because it means a subject-object or self-body conglomeration which, according to this philosophy, is impossible. An objector, however, may retort that this is flying in the face of facts, since it is an obvious fact that man is a being in whom consciousness is found to go with a physical organism.

Even if we grant for the sake of argument the Advaitin's contention that consciousness cannot have physical properties nor can the body have consciousness, this cannot be construed as an objection to regarding man or individual self as a psycho-physical complex — as a being having an aspect of consciousness and an aspect of physicality. This would not be identity of subject and object, but only their being together in certain formations. Why should the individual conceived in this way be illusory?

Advaita is very intolerant about anything objective, bodily or physical. For it, consciousness being the sole reality, object as such is false and illusory. The supposed illusoriness of the individual self derives from its embodiment. The unreality of the embodiment is because of the illusoriness of the body itself. But

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even if it be supposed that subject-object coalition is not possible, it does not follow from this that the body or object as such is illusory. Cancellation of illusion or hallucination, no doubt, proves that some objects are unreal. But it does not prove that all objects are unreal. Illusoriness of dream-objects does not entail that the world is illusory. It is rather on the basis of waking experience that dream-objects are rejected as illusory. On seeing that some objects are not real, Advaita jumps to the sweeping conclusion that all objects are unreal. It makes the subject-object distinction coincide with the true-false or real-unreal distinction. For this, adequate justification seems to be lacking.

We have been unable to accept K.C. Bhattacharya's view that the notion of illusoriness of the individual self is borne out by the awareness of contradiction involved in self having been believed as not-self, as shown in the analysis of moral repentance. It may now further be said that it is not possible for the individual self to be conscious of itself as illusory. Just as it is not possible for me to know that I do not exist, so also it is not possible for me to know that I am illusory. Here it is irrelevant whether the individual is embodied or not. To regard the body as other than one's self is not to reject it as illusory. One's knowledge of oneself involves self-consciousness. Self-consciousness, like knowledge, involves the distinction between subject and object, between I and me. If, in the process, the object or me appears as something alien to the subject or I, then self-consciousness would lapse into an awareness of an other. But in this, where is the sense of illusoriness? On the other hand, if the object appears not as alien to the subject though distinguished from it, again there is no question of illusoriness. Thus it may be concluded that even if the individual self were *per impossible* illusory it is inconceivable that it would know itself as such.[7]

It is of course always possible to define the concepts of 'individual self' and 'illusoriness' in such a way that it would follow that to be the one is to be the other. If, for example, by 'individual self' were meant such an embodied being as man, and all that is fleeting, evanescent or impermanent were regarded as illusory, then no doubt every individual self would be illusory inasmuch as body, if not also consciousness, does undergo change. But then, when the concepts are thus defined, there need not be any quarrel.

There remains the question whether, if the body were total-

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ly excluded, differences between individual selves would still remain. If not, then that would amount to a view that there are no selves but only Self. But there is no need to think that individual differences would be obliterated if selves were constituted solely by consciousness. For there not only can be but also are distinctions within consciousness. Consciousness admits of degrees of intensity or comprehensiveness. This is exemplified in varying strength of attentiveness, as also in gradual passage from full wakefulness to sleep or *vice versa*. Further, there can be different conscious systems with distinctions within each. Every man, insofar as he is integrated, illustrates such a system in respect of his aspect of consciousness, containing elements related by memory or otherwise. Such an exclusive picture of conscious complexes, of course, raises problems of its own, *e.g.*, the problem of relation or awareness as between complexes. But our concern in this paper has been mainly to deal with the question as to whether individual selves are illusory. Our deliberations, which have kept clear of the claims based on mystic intuition, have led us to think that the Advaita position on the question is rather far-fetched, counter-intuitive and unacceptable. This, however, is not to say anything about other aspects of the Advaita doctrine.

NOTES

1. *Vide* K. C. Bhattacharya: *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. I, edited by Gopinath Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1956 (pp. 113-124).
2. Words within brackets mine.
3. Words within brackets mine.
4. K. C. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.
5. One's self being a non-physical object of thought or self-consciousness.
6. *Vide*, *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara.
7. For the basic points developed in this paragraph and the preceding one, I am indebted to N. V. Banerji's paper "Fundamentals of Advaita Vedānta' in *Current Trends in Indian Philosophy*, edited by Murty and Rao, Andhra University Press, Waltair, 1972.

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8

AN AXIOLOGICAL VIEW OF AVIDYĀ

R. L. SINGH

It is argued by some critics of Advaita that Śaṅkara's doctrine of *māyā* gives a very wrong account of the objective world and the individuals. They maintain that the doctrine of *māyā* has reduced all morality to a mockery. According to them, it is anti-religious or even atheistic. Although no attempt is being made here to show that Śaṅkara is infallible, most of the critics of Śaṅkara's doctrine of *māyā* have mistaken him. Here an attempt is made only to remove the misplaced criticism of his views. What is the nature of the mistake about Śaṅkara's doctrine of *māyā*? Perhaps most of the adverse critics of Śaṅkara have understood the doctrine of *māyā* as meaning that the world of objects does not have an existence, and individuals like you and me also do not have any real existence. So the most serious objection against Śaṅkara's doctrine of *māyā* would be that it resolves to efface the world and the individuals. The critics forthwith begin to say in some such manner: Is your eating *māyā*? Is your walking *māyā*? When it is all *māyā*, why do you seek shelter against heat and cold? I consider this criticism of the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara to be vulgarization of one of the loftiest philosophies. It is a rebuke to Vedāntic acumen and understanding. If this vulgarization, this misrepresentation of Śaṅkara's doctrine of *māyā* were due to ignorance only, it could be excusable and the untutored and the ignorant could be instructed; but, if this vulgarization and misrepresentation were deliberate, it may be viewed not as a criticism but as an emotional outburst of some deep-seated prejudice and bias which hardly need any philosophical notice. Coming to the main point, it may be submitted that Śaṅkara and his followers never say that the world is non-existent (*asat*) or that it is an existent of the order of dreams. Śaṅkara informs us that negation (*abhāva*) of the world is not a presented datum (*upalabdha*). The experience of the world stands affirmed. So, to say that it is nothing, would

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be absurd. At the same time, we find Śaṅkara telling us that *vaidharmya* or the 'nothingness' or the 'no-factness' of the world is not of the order of dreams. So this much stands well attested that in Śaṅkara's philosophy it has not been maintained that the world does not exist or the world is of the nature of dreams, the creation of fancy or imagination. So it does not mean that I do not exist or you do not exist, or the environment in which I and you move, or the station of life at which I and you are situated, does not exist. Nevertheless the illusoriness of the world defined as *mithyātva* and the ultimate reality of Brahman constitute the central core of Śaṅkara's philosophy. The world is illusory and Brahman alone is real. Further, one more proposition is to be added and you (the individual) are non-different from or identical with Brahman. All this has to be understood against a certain background — this background is the background of the attitude to which Śaṅkara's philosophy is tuned or oriented. What is this attitude? What is the goal of philosophizing? The answer is given in almost all the works of Śaṅkara. We are told that the be-all and end-all of all philosophizing is the quest of the enduring as distinguished from the fleeting and evanescent. Śaṅkara's philosophizing is tuned to *nityānitya-vastu-viveka.* The problem is not merely the problem of assortment of things in terms of their duration. The problem is essentially and really the problem of seeking. The problem is: Is that which you are seeking such as an intended object like pleasure will give you the happiness you are striving to obtain? The answer is: All that you are seeking as an other of your self for the sake of fulfilment is an illusion. Seeking yourself for nothing other than your own self shall give you the satisfaction you seek. And yourself is the fullness of bliss. There is no want in it, no care in it, no fear in it. All otherness is illusory but an illusion which is so enduring and which is so easily apt to be forgotten as an illusion. The sense of otherness creates want, it creates care, it creates sin. The value you are seeking is freedom from want, freedom from care, freedom from fear, freedom from pain, from suffering, from misery. The Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara tells us that you are yourself this freedom supreme. In vain and deluded you seek this freedom outside of you. You are all the time under the impression that you will be free by seeking an object of your desire. This is the grand illusion. A dissipation of this illusion of non-fulfilment is the thing needed. The illusion of non-fulfilment has to be dissipated and dissolved.

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How? Through the hearing of the Vedāntic texts, through a process of argumentation and dialectic and through a process of constant meditation. This will generate an intuition for the real and the enduring against the unreal, the ephemeral, the transitory and the fleeting. The Advaita philosophy is a philosophy of value and its attitude is clearly axiological. The clue to this axiology lies through knowledge — the knowledge of what is enduring against what is not enduring. The realization wished for is the realization of *bodha* or intuition that I myself am freedom. The Advaita Vedānta has nowhere denied you the right to live and to cherish your friends and your environment. Everything is real and so are you; but, if you think that a hankering attitude and toiling to seek what you hanker after shall give you the happiness everlasting, you are mistaken.

The misunderstanding which has caused this unjust criticism is due to some analogies and illustrations used by the Advaita philosophers. The world is *mithyā* like the snake seen in the rope. The snake is a no-fact. The world is not factually a nought. Here snake and rope — both are metaphors. They stand for values. Rope symbolises an enduring value. Snake symbolises a value fleeting, flimsy and evanescent. This subtle symbolism shall explain the Advaitic position better. The Advaita philosophy is thus an exhortation to look at everything in the light of this attitude. This attitude is the attitude of Ātman as freedom. Free subject does not mean freedom as the attribute but subject as freedom.

In this context, a controversy, whether Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara is an idealistic or realistic philosophy, may be considered. What has been said above implies that Advaita Vedānta may be regarded as idealistic or realistic, though not in the usual sense of these terms. The question regarding idealism and realism arises specifically in relation to the problem concerning the existential nature and status of the objective world. Ordinarily idealism thinks of the objective world as dependent on mind and realism thinks of the objective world as independent of mind. The idealist describes it as will or as idea. The realist maintains that the real world is not will, it is not idea. The mind may know the real world, but it does not constitute it or determine its nature. From the criticism given by Śaṅkara of the Vijñānavāda of Buddhist philosophers, Śaṅkara is not prepared to identify the objective world with idea or with dream. So Śaṅkara's position, in this res-

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pect, must necessarily be considered realistic. But these labels do not give any indication of Śaṅkara's real philosophical position. The world in the last analysis is pronounced to be *mithyā* or false, and so is the empirical individuality also with its mental apparatus. So idealism and realism both are inadequate labels to express the metaphysical position of Śaṅkara. It is well known that Śaṅkara makes a very significant distinction between *vyavahāra* and *paramārtha*. The mind as well as objects belong to the level of *vyavahāra*. So the question whether Śaṅkara is a realist or an idealist relates to the level of *vyavahāra* only. But *vyavahāra* level is ultimately *mithyā*. All these distinctions are within *mithyātva*. But if they have any meaning at all, the Advaita philosopher would say, the objective world is not a product of the mind. It is simply revealed to the mind and not made or constructed by it. Its cause is Īśvara, which is Brahman qualified by *māyā*. This position of Śaṅkara is to be distinguished clearly from the position of Vijñānavāda philosopher, for whom the world is the projection of mind, which has been identified by him with pure act or will. The Advaita Vedānta, however, can be understood as an idealism of a special order. It may be described as value-centric idealism. Some kind of value is ascribable to everything in the objective world. In the attitude of infatuation or *moha*, it is likely to be thought that happiness lies in seeking one's self-fulfilment in possessing or getting away from objects. This is clearly the objective attitude and it does impart a colouring to the objects. There is another attitude too — the attitude of freedom. I am freedom itself and so I am self-fulfilling and self-fulfilled. All seeking in the objective attitude is self-alienation. When this attitude dawns, nothing from the world has disappeared, nothing from the objective world has been taken away. But in this attitude everything right from the stars to the dust heap acquires a new meaning, a new import, a new significance. The bare existence of objects is not in dispute. It is a barren problem. Existence of objects cannot be dissociated from the value they portend. And if this is so, I do not find that there is even an escape possible for us from the idealism of the value-centric type.

So the illusoriness of the world that is taken as a corollary of Vedāntic axiology is to be considered in its proper placement. In this respect three views available in contemporary Indian philosophy may be examined. First, S. Radhakrishnan thinks that illusion is that which is imaginary or rooted in fancy, *e.g.* the

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snake in the rope. At the same time, of two persons, one may see the rope as rope, and the other may see the rope as a snake. So, that which has no objective reality and subsists simply in the fancy or the imagination of somebody is illusory. The Sanskrit equivalent for it is *prātibhāsika*, which according to Radhakrishnan is essentially different from *vyāvahārika*. The world, according to Radhakrishnan, may be unreal because contradicted by the experience of the highest, but it is not illusory. The existence of the world is nowhere subjectively determined. So when we say that the world is *māyā*, it does not mean that the world is illusory. It cannot be produced by us at will, nor can it be withdrawn. It is also not subjective, it is commonly shared. So he would say that "unreal the world may be, but illusory it is not." Secondly, according to D. S. Sarma (*Hindu Renaissance*), illusory does not mean that which is subjective in essence. It simply means that which has no real substratum or that which is without a substratum, *e.g.* a dream content. According to him the snake having a substratum in the rope is not an illusion, because it is not without a support. So when Śaṅkara says that the world is like a snake in the rope, he does not mean to identify it with a dream content, like a thing which has no substratum in reality. Because the world has Brahman as its substratum, it cannot be illusory. Thirdly, K. C. Bhattacharya in his *Concept of Māyā*, as also in his *False and the Subjective* gives an illuminating analysis of illusion. According to him the world is an illusion entirely in the sense in which the snake in the rope is an illuison. The snake is merely a believed content, though actually of the nature of no-fact. The rope is a knowledge content and is actually of the nature of fact. What happens in the state of illusion is the non-discrimination of two subjective functions — belief and knowledge. Under the spell of ignorance belief passes for knowledge. So the illusory is that which even while it is merely the content of belief, passes for content of knowledge. It is actually a no-fact, which appears to be a fact. It is a no-fact covering a fact and at the same time appearing as a fact.

The world is an illusion, even when it is not a product of fancy, or is such a stuff as dreams are made of. Radhakrishnan's interpretation may not be acceptable because he restricts it to a product of the imagination. The snake in the rope is no product of imagination and is yet an illusion. D. S. Sarma appears to be too restrictive in confining illusion to such substratumless con-

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tents as dreams are, and comes to the rescue of the snake in the rope, because it has a real substratum. K. C. Bhattacharya's definition of illusion as a confusion of subjective functions may be found more acceptable than the afore-mentioned two definitions. No doubt Śaṅkara does make a distinction among three grades of existence: (i) *pāramārthika* — the ultimately real, (ii) *vyāvahārika* — the pragmatically or empirically real, and (iii) *prātibhāsika* — the deceptively real or illusory. But what *prātibhāsika* is to *vyāvahārika*, that *vyāvahārika* is to *pāramārthika*. If *prātibhāsika* is illusory in relation to *vyāvahārika*, then *vyāvahārika* is also illusory in relation to *pāramārthika*. If the snake is a no-fact in relation to the rope, then the world, on exactly the same analogy, is no-fact in relation to Brahman. The snake is a content of belief passing for a content of knowledge. So is the world a content of belief passing for a content of knowledge. The world of *vyāvahārika* experience is so much cancellable in its substratum as is the snake, but the latter endures for a much shorter period of time than the former. Here an objection may be raised. The world of *vyavahāra* is shared by all of us, but the snake in the rope is not so shared. So the world of *vyavahāra* is public and snake in the rope is private. So Radhakrishnan may be right. But the objection may be answered like this. We ask: Cannot there be a republic of persons suffering from astigmatism like all of us seeing the moon as no bigger than a silver plate? The distemper can be both endemic and epidemic. Therefore we submit that we could use the analogy of subjective distemper for explaining a cosmic distemper also. *Avidyā* is *avidyā*, its occurrence in one person or in all the persons does not mean that two different analogies have to be made of it.

Most importantly *māyā* is the other side of Brahman and *ajñāna* or *avidyā* is the other side of the embodied self (*jīva*) who is seeking his self-fulfilment through all his aspirations and cogitations. As he progresses in his goal, the influence of *avidyā* or *ajñāna* diminishes. Finally, he realizes that his nature is the same as Brahman and so at the stage of this experience, his *ajñāna* also becomes identified with *māyā*. So it can be said that although *ajñāna* is eradicable, *māyā* is not so. But if *māyā* is taken as containing the seed of *ajñāna*, some sort of *ajñāna* called *avidyāleśa* may be regarded as co-extensive with *māyā*. But this should be clear to every student of Vedānta of Śaṅkara that *jīva* has no control over *māyā* although he has some control over *ajñāna*. But what is sig-

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nificant for Vedāntic concept of liberation is the view that *māyā* or *ajñāna* is to be understood as an axiological category which is necessary for the attainment of liberation or freedom. If this is accepted, then most of the controversies over *māyā* or *ajñāna* can be dissolved from the axiological point of view.

Basically the controversy, whether *avidyā* is *bhāvarūpa* or not, is the most relevant one in so far as the axiology of Vedānta is concerned, for all statements about *avidyā* are value-judgements, made in the light of *jñāna* that is most valuable. *Avidyā* means ignorance. In the first instance it means the concealment of that which has to be known and secondly, it means to know as that which it is not. *Avidyā* or ignorance, thus, performs three functions: (i) *āvaraṇa*, which consists in concealing the that, *i.e.* the object of knowledge, (ii) *vikṣepa*, which consists in making the object of knowledge appear or to be cognised as that which it is not, (iii) as *mala*, which makes every product of *avidyā* as an evil. As for example, when I say, "This is a snake," I am ignorant of the real object 'rope', in so far as the rope is concealed from my vision. I am simply not knowing it. This is what ignorance implies in the aspect of its immediacy. But either the matter ends here or I may by some circumstance be made to investigate further into the matter. And I may say my ignorance of the rope is the absence in my consciousness of the knowledge of the rope as rope, and may further say that in the present case the non-knowledge or the absence of knowledge of the rope as rope is filled in as the cognition of a snake. But this is not the whole story. My knowledge of the snake generates fear which causes many other evils in its train. The need is not only to remove the appearance of the snake but also to get rid of all its effects which may survive even after the disappearance of the snake.

Avidyā or ignorance is *bhāvarūpa*, the meaning of this statement can be understood only by contrasting it to the view that *avidyā* is *abhāvarūpa*. Those who maintain that *avidyā* is *abhāvarūpa* simply mean that *avidyā* has no positive import or positive status. To say that I am ignorant about the rope would make sense only if I were to transcribe the proposition by saying that when I am ignorant about the rope, there is in my consciousness non-presence of the knowledge of rope. The point simply is this: my ignorance of the rope would make sense only if it were understood as mediated by the consciousness of the absence of the knowledge of the rope. My ignorance of the rope would make sense only

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when this consciousness were to be understood with reference to the absence of the knowledge of rope. Or negation of the knowledge of the rope is the *sine qua non* of any statement of mine about my ignorance of the rope. Ignorance has, thus, a mediated necessity about it. It is a contingent situation, intelligible only as the negation of knowledge of something.

The Advaita philosphers urge that the situation is not like this. I can meaningfully say that I am ignorant about '*tāja*' without presupposing that if I were to know '*tāja*' my awareness would be of this and this description and because I find the non-presence of such an awareness in me, I am ignorant about '*tāja*'. To take another example, "I am ignorant of my self," the opponent would say —"This statement would make sense only when you were to know the import of '*tattvamasi*' and that the meaning of this proposition would make sense only if it were understood as an antecedent negation of such an understanding as is supposed to be the experiential import of the *mahāvākya*, '*tattvamasi*'." The Advaita philosopher is of the opinion that this interpretation of *avidyā* or ignorance is too far-fetched and adventitious. My ignorance implies the non-presence of such a knowledge as would negate my ignorance, but it does not mean that ignorance as a situation in which I am immediately placed has to be understood as *abhāvarūpa*. Ignorance is a situation characterized by immediacy. Its negative description in terms of the absence of that knowledge which removes it may be tenable. But this description of it does not make it existentially negative. It is positive in the aspect of acquaintance, but negative in the aspect of description. If we may say that *avidyā* is *abhāvarūpa*, we presuppose that it could not have an essence of its own. That in terms of the essence of which we describe it is its other knowledge which means knowledge of reality. It means that ignorance could be described only with reference to knowledge. If this is so, we should have knowledge first and then negate it and then take this negation as the function of ignorance. This is plain non-sense for if I were to know before I could be ignorant, I could never be ignorant. Ignorance implies knowledge as its necessary implicate but knowledge does not imply ignorance as its necessary implicate. The passage is "from ignorance to knowledge" (*asato mā jyotirgamaya*) and not from knowledge to ignorance.

The entire situation appears to be in a state of muddle. How? We shall see the crux of the situation which lies in this: I

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may be ignorant of the correct answer to the question you are putting to me and that is warrant enough for me to say that I am in ignorance. Thus my ignorance is a positive situation considered ontically. At the same time when you say, "you confess you are in ignorance," do you know the precise nature of your ignorance? And point to me the correct answer that liquidates my ignorance. You are attempting to present to me an epistemological analysis of the situation of my ignorance, and by your telling me the nature of epistemology or logic of my ignorance, you are making me feel in my awareness the absence of a cognition of a particular description. *Avidyā* can be looked at in two different situations: (i) cosmological and (ii) logical. In the first situation it is *bhāvarūpa* and in the second situation *abhāvarūpa*. Again we can express the same thing in another form of words. Denotatively it is *bhāvarūpa* and connotatively it is *abhāvarūpa*. If the Vedānta philosopher asks me — Do you know Brahman? I reply, "I am ignorant, I do not know." But if he again asks me — "What is the nature of the content of my ignorance"? and without stopping for an answer from me, he tells me that such and such is the nature of the knowledge of Brahman, and it is the absence of such a knowledge which fills the content of my ignorance, I would know the nature of my ignorance by knowing the privation in my awareness of the cognition of a specific nature. Thus it would be *abhāvarūpa*.

Thus far the positive character of *avidyā* has been explained existentially, but the question is: "What is this existential standpoint?" The Vedāntic position may be put in a nutshell that what is existential is an immediate experience of the reality that transcends both the subject and the object. This reality when realized in its full splendour is the *summum bonum* of human life. Therefore this reality is the core content of value that pervades the entire gamut of cosmological and logical discussion about *avidyā* that has been mentioned above. On deeper analysis it is discovered that no logical or cosmological category is value-neutral, although *prima facie* it appears to be unconnected with value-judgements.

Another issue that has been traditionally raised about *avidyā* is concerning its locus and objectivity. It has been asked — What is is the locus of *avidyā*? Over this problem there has been a sharp difference among the Advaita philosophers after Śaṅkara. The philosophers of the Vārttika sub-school of Sureśvara and the

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Vivaraṇa sub-school of Padmapāda, Prakāśātman, Govindācārya and Vidyāraṇya are emphatically of the opinion that Brahman is the locus as well as the object of *avidyā*. The philosophers of the *Bhāmatī* sub-school of Vācaspati followed by Amalānanda and also Appaya Dīkṣita echoing in a considerable manner the opinions of Maṇḍana Miśra, are of the view that *jīva* is the locus of *avidyā* and that Brahman the object of this *avidyā*. Though on the three basic propositions both the parties are agreed, "Brahman is real, the world is *mithyā*, *jīva* is ultimately Brahman," their sharp division on this point is the cause of a lot of controversy, most of which does not pertain to the elucidation of the nature of the reality. The philosophers of the Vārttika and Vivaraṇa sub-schools have aptly asked the philosophers of Bhāmatī sub-school: You are well within your rights to say that *avidyā* has its locus in *jīva* but it may be asked—from where did *jīva* come and in what is it rooted? And the answer given by you is — *jīva* is rooted in *avidyā*. And the philosophers of the Vārttika and Vivaraṇa sub-schools may well remark: "Is it not a piece of circular reasoning — *avidyā* rooted in *jīva* and *jīva* rooted in *avidyā*?" The philosophers of the *Bhāmatī* sub-school might reply by saying that there is nothing wrong in such a reasoning. Both being beginningless the *cakraka* or circularity in argument does not apply as a charge. The philosophers of the Bhāmatī sub-school may well ask the philosophers of the Vārttika and Vivaraṇa sub-schools: How can *svayam-prakāśa* Brahman be ever covered by *avidyā*? Brahman being *vidyārūpa* there is no question regarding Brahman providing an accommodation to *avidyā*. And this school might well find a way out by saying that *avidyā* is such a negation of Brahman as it is itself *mithyā* in the last analysis. So they would say that the locus of *mithyātva* is Brahman, but *mithyātva* itself is *mithyā*. So there is no harm in speaking about Brahman as the locus of *avidyā*.

The best thing to do in this situation, according to us, would be to ask the interrogator or the person questioning: "Are you questioning in the capacity of a follower of the school, or in the capacity of an opponent, or in the capacity of a person who has heard someone putting this question, so in the capacity of a casual interventionist only?" If you are a follower of the school, you know the nature of Brahman as all-encompassing reality and truth. Where there is Brahman, there is no *avidyā*, there is no *jīvatva*. So to you our only remark is — at least you should not

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have put this question, or you are misleading me by putting such a question. If you are only an opponent, you do not understand the Advaita situation and in asking this question, you are presupposing something you cannot, you are biting more than you can chew. You are presupposing a triplicate ontological situation, consisting of Brahman, *jīva* and *avidyā* and you are posing as if you know all about the Advaita Vedānta except this that you are not able to find the locus of *avidyā*. To you, I must say — you are entirely ignorant of the Advaita situation and your question presupposes more than it should. If, however, you have simply heard someone putting this question to someone, I would humbly submit that you have no need of an answer. Since the question is not yours, you would not understand the answer too. And if the question was really and genuinely yours, you would get the answer yourself sooner or later.

Our considered reply would be that *avidyā* is like a malignant disease, it is detected at one spot but its roots are everywhere. *Avidyā* is an attitude which is detected in me, but in so far as I am not ultimately different from Brahman, it spreads out to Brahman also. *Avidyā* is a total situation which obscures my true nature to me by making it appear as something different from what it is. In this total situation I see my real self as my body which is a part of the external world and consider myself as a sentient centre different from absolute consciousness. But the entire situation is all too intriguing and complicated to admit of a categorically clear and singularly acceptable answer. I think for a correct answer one may turn to the *vāṇī* of the saints like Tulasīdāsa: "O Keśava, it is very difficult to speak about your creation or *māyā*, so it is better to be silent and restrained in speech. On the void of its convas (wall) some handless painter having no colour with him has painted this picture of the world. Nothing in the world can ever wash out this wall, this wall, this void as the convas on which this painting has been done. And the real centre of 'duḥkha' is inside your own self. This *avidyā*, which like the alligator resides inside and devours those who come to drink of this illusory stream."

The entire philosophical position, in respect of Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara can be expressed in three basic propositions: (a) Brahman alone is real. (b) *Jagat* is mithyā. (c) There is in the last analysis a perfect identity of jīva (the individual) and Brahman (the absolute). As a matter of fact the whole of Vedān-

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tic philosophy could be expressed by saying that Brahman alone is real. When Brahman alone is real, the other two propositions are apparently redundant. Insofar as all philosophising has to take its rise in my experience and the contents of my experience, I must also give an adequate account of myself and my world. And the answer is: Brahman is ultimately real: the world is *mithyā* (false); and the *jīva* is identical with Brahman. So how are we to understand Brahman and then the empirical individuality and *jagat*. What harmonizes these three statements is the doctrine of *māyā*. So the doctrine of *māyā* is that all comprehensive formula in terms of which we can understand the situation in respect of the world.

Of the three propositions only two need to be considered in this context: (a) Brahman alone is real; and (b) *jagat* is *mithyā*. The third is out of question because it has been said that *jīvā* is non-different from Brahman. So the question arises: If Brahman alone is real, what is the metaphysical position of *jagat*? And the answer is: It is of the nature of *māyā*. If we translate the term 'real', in proposition, Brahman alone is real, as 'fact', then the term, *mithyā* or false would be translatable as 'no-fact'. There are three stages through which this no-fact passes and these three stages are the three stages of *māyā*. Under the spell of ignorance or *avidyā* that which is really of the nature of no-fact and which at best could only be spoken of as indescribable datum, passes for a fact or is believed to be a fact. So under the spell of ignorance, I believe a no-fact to be a fact. The situation is best described by means of the commonplace illustration, chosen by the Advaita philosopher, that of a rope appearing as a snake. Till I have not seen that *this* is a rope, I take *this* as a snake. The three stages are: (i) This is a snake (*vāstavī*). (ii) This is indescribable (*anirvacanīyā*). (iii) This is a rope, which could never have been a snake (*tuccha*).

Even a casual view of the afore-mentioned description will indicate that the progress from the real (*vāstava*) to the worthless (*tuccha*) through semblance (*pratibhāsa*) is axiological in its nature. That which was taken to be valuable becomes on the criterion of logical judgement a disvalue that is called worthless. So the search for value encompasses the whole phenomenology of *avidyā*. It is, therefore, to be discovered by everyman in his own manner to realize the highest value of self-attainment. Thus the three stages in the phenomenology of *avidyā* are in fact the perennial

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features of value-experience and value-realization. The world of *māyā* is a phenomenon of relative value that points out to the absolute, *i.e. sat-cit-ānanda*.

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9

THE CONCEPT OF ADVAITA A RE-EVALUATION

A. RAMAMURTY

Since its systematic exposition by Śaṅkara many philosophers and thinkers have been attracted to the philosophy of Advaita, though it seems none, including Śaṅkara, could make it completely intelligible and acceptable to the rational understanding of man or provide adequate explanation to all the philosophical problems it logically involves. Many have attempted in their own ways to provide more and more adequate explanation to these problems. However, they are aware of the fact that all the philosophical explanations of the problems, either seen or anticipated by them or raised by the opponents, are not convincing, logically adequate and irrefutable. Yet Advaita is not outright rejected by them. We find this ambivalent attitude to Advaita with almost all the major thinkers of Advaita. It may be due largely to the fact that Advaita at least in its original formulation in the *Upaniṣads* is not strictly speaking speculative in character, or simply a system of philosophical thought based on man's rational understanding, but a vision or lived experience or realisation with the seers of the *Upaniṣads*. Even in the writings of Śaṅkara, which are devoted more to a systematic and philosophical representation of the Upaniṣadic vision, only an attempt is made to make the Upaniṣadic truth intelligible or meaningful to the rational understanding of man, but not to reduce or translate it totally into a system of ideas or concepts. At the most his writings may help one to see the validity and meaningfulness of Advaita not strictly in a logical sense but in a different sense, as the primary object of his philosophical activity is not to make people understand and appreciate intellectually the truth of the *Upaniṣads*, but to make them realise it directly. Just as the *Veda* becomes *aveda* when the truth is directly seen, so also the writings of Śaṅkara are meant to show a person the intended meaning of the *Upaniṣads* or the

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truth expressed through the Upaniṣadic statements, but not to demonstrate it completely logically. Concluding his *Kārikā* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, Gauḍapāda says: "Having realised that state (of non-duality) which is extremely difficult to be grasped, profound, birthless, always the same, all-light and free from multiplicity or non-dual, we adore it as best as we can." (*durādarśamatigambhīram ajaṁ sāmyaṁ viśāradam, buddhva padam-anānātvaṁ namaskurmo yathābalam*).[1] Commenting upon it Śaṅkara says significantly that Advaita which is non-empirical (*avyavahāra*) or empirically not intelligible and meaningful is viewed, represented and adored empirically to the best of our ability and understanding (*avyavahāryamapi vyavahāra-gocaramāpadya yathābala yathā śaktitya rdaḥ*). Or "by bringing it within the range of empirical dealings though it defies all relative experience and representation."[2] It is needless to say that the later day Advaitins have comprehended the meaning of Advaita according to their own maturity and understanding whether they acknowledge it or not. No body can meaningfully assert that he has completely comprehended the meaning of Advaita as it involves a basic contradiction, and one who has at least grasped the profundity of the concept of Advaita will have the humility to admit that what he has comprehended is only an approximation or an empirical mode of understanding Advaita which is beyond and yet comprehends all understanding.

I propose to discuss in this paper a concept which is central to the philosophy of Śaṅkara, namely the concept of Advaita. What I intend to do is to understand the concept in my own way without at the same time deviating from the tradition. I refrain from quoting the texts extensively though it is fully based on them.

Expressing in a general way his attitude and approach to philosophy Śaṅkara observes, of course, while criticising the Buddhist schools of philosophy, especially the Vijñānavāda and Mādhyamika that "whenever something that is well established (*loka-prasiddha*) is not admitted by philosophers (*parīkṣaka*) they may indeed establish their own view and demolish the contrary opinion by means of words, but they thereby neither convince others nor even themselves. Whatever has been ascertained to be such and such must also be represented as such and such; attempts to represent it as something else prove nothing but vain talkativeness of those who make those attempts."[3] Frequently we come across in the writings of Śaṅkara, not only while criticising the philosophical positions of others but even while expound-

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ing his own philosophy, remarks and observations expressing his faith in what is known through various means of valid knowledge, and what is well established and commonly accepted, and also his opposition to all those who in their philosophical investigations try to deny validity to what is well established and acknowledged by all. He appeals constantly to what is commonly observed and experienced in refuting certain philosophical positions, like Vijñānavāda which either deny it validity or go against it. At times, he refers to what is commonly experienced or observed in refuting a philosophical position or argument. "If you deny an observed fact saying it is impossible you would be contradicting experience, a thing which nobody will allow. Nor is there any question of impossibility with regard to an observed fact; because it has actually been observed."[4] This he does not only to refute the positions of those who do not agree with him, but also while expounding his own philosophy. Much of his thought, which is developed by way of interpreting the Vedānta texts from his own perspective, is positive in its outlook, and is quite intelligible to rational or logical understanding of man. But in the final analysis he rejects validity to it. He was well aware of the arguments and philosophical positions that were current in his time and go against the validity of his philosophy, and also could clearly anticipate several possible arguments against his philosophy. Most of the problems and arguments he anticipated against his philophy and answered are quite modern in their formulation. And he was honest to admit that all the problems which an enquiring mind could raise against the validity of Advaita are all not easy to explain rationally or logically. He could see where logical reasoning fails to explain cogently certain problems involved in the concept of Advaita and also its incapacity to support and establish the contrary position. In other words, he tried to formulate and explain cogently the basic teaching of the *Upaniṣads* as far as human understanding with the help of reason can do, and admitted its incapacity when it fails to explain certain crucial problems. His attitude to reason is quite positive and open, but when it is seen to fail in helping human understanding at certain point in comprehending the truth of the *Upaniṣads*, he did not dogmatically cling to it and offer pseudo arguments.

The *Upaniṣads*, the basic source of Śaṅkara's philosophy, are also positive in their attitude to several philosophical problems. They also often appeal to common human experience which is

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neither ridiculed nor rejected. Most of the Upaniṣadic statements are positive in their attitude towards the world, man and his problems either empirical or spiritual. Various metaphysical views find their expression in the *Upaniṣads* and the attitude of *Upaniṣads* towards them is not one of clear rejection in favour of any one view. On the other hand, the validity of the various views is seen in an organic or evolutionary perspective, and each view is assigned its own place, significance and validity according to the level of growth and maturity of man's understanding in knowing the truth. The various views and doctrines expressed in the *Upaniṣads*, either about man or about the world or Reality and their inter-relations, are not out-right rejected in favour of one view, but are sought to be organised and integrated into a perspective, and each is given its own place, significance and validity. It is also true that the various views and definitions of Reality found in the *Upaniṣads* are not compatible with some of the major or basic statements of the *Upaniṣads*. But the point is that those ideas and definitions which are not consistent with the so called fundamental statements of the *Upaniṣads* are not criticised and rejected, but are sought to be seen in a perspective and integrated into an all-inclusive world-view of the *Upaniṣads* so that each view or doctrine finds its own place and validity in the total perspective. These observations are made with an intention to showing how despite their positive approach and attitude to several metaphysical views and problems both the *Upaniṣads* and Śaṅkara are not able to find them ultimate justification and validity either on the grounds of logical reasoning or on the basis of experience.

Now we cannot say that Śaṅkara was not aware of or could not anticipate or foresee the various strongest objections and arguments against his philosophy. Being fully aware of the possible objections and arguments against his philosophy or knowing fully well that his final position lacks real philosophical or rational justification, he was uncompromising or firm in maintaining Advaita. And this makes one ponder why he was so uncompromising in his attitude to Advaita and its validity. Normally a philosopher accepts an argument as long as he is not aware of counter argument or till its logical validity is criticised and denied, but when one upholds a position knowing the possible criticisms against its validity, then two things are possible. One may either consider the counter arguments and criticisms are no real arguments or they are beside the point or miss it in criticising

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Advaita.

In the following discussion I would like to present two or three ways of understanding the meaning of the concept of Advaita which we find either in the *Upaniṣads* or in the writings of Śaṅkara, and argue which one is more acceptable to the spirit of Advaita as expressed in the *Upaniṣads*, and later represented by Śaṅkara.

According to one way of understanding, which is preferred mostly by those who are not for various reasons, which are not always strictly philosophical, in sympathy with Advaita, it means final negation of the reality of everything except that of Brahman or Ātman. In absolute terms the reality of everything except that of Brahman or Ātman is an illusion as in reality nothing other than Brahman exists. And as the nature of Brahman is free from all types of change it is in no sense an explanation of anything other than itself. Since it is the only reality in the absolute sense, and as it is not the explanation or cause for the existence of anything other than itself, whatever may appear to be real to man's empirical knowledge and experience has no independent or objective reality. As the reality of anything other than Brahman is co-terminus with empirical knowledge and experience, just as a dream reality, it ceases to be the moment it is not so known and experienced. Now the reality of anything other than Brahman or Ātman is defined for two important and logically valid reasons. The reality of the world and the individual self is denied because by their very nature they do not deserve the status of Reality, and also on the ground that they are not experienced or known in that form when Brahman or Ātman is directly realised. Besides, our conception of the nature of Brahman or absolute is such that we cannot explain in terms of it, in a logically consistent way, the reality of anything other than itself, like the changing and imperfect world and the individual selves. If, on the other hand, Brahman is to be the cause of the world and the individual selves the nature of Brahman should be so conceived as to have a capacity for change, and a will or motive to give birth to something out of itself. And in all such explanations, which are attempted by theistically minded Vedāntins, the conception of Brahman falls short of absolute perfection and fullness. Without somehow compromising with the absolute character of Brahman we find it logically difficult or rather impossible to explain the existence of a reality other than Brahman in terms of Brahman, and especially

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the contingent reality of the world and the individual selves. Either we have to conceive and define Brahman or absolute in imperfect terms or deny reality to the world, as the reality of both cannot be reconciled at least logically. If Brahman is absolute and perfect it cannot be an explanation of the world, and if the reality of the world is to be accepted and derived from the reality of Brahman the nature of the latter is to be conceived and defined in relative terms or in terms of human understanding which is formed mostly by empirical experience. If the reality of Brahman is to be accepted in its unalloyed purity and perfection the reality of the world which lacks any cogent explanation is to be denied. This position is true, not only logically, but also in the light of Brahman/Ātman realisation. Anything that is experienced or conceived by man cannot be absolute, as strictly speaking the absolute cannot be an idea or notion in the ordinary sense of the term. Here one important discovery of the Upanishads, which is completely accepted by Śaṅkara, is that the Self is absolute in the true sense of the term. Self as pure consciousness or simple awareness to which all that man knows, experiences and understands or thinks is given as an object is radically distinct from all that can be known or experienced as an object. Now the nature of Self is such that it being the principle of awareness in all human experience and knowledge it is untouched or unaffected by all that is known or experienced or conceived. All notions like finite/infinite, conditioned/absolute, mortal/immortal, perfect/imperfect etc. can legitimately be attributed or predicated to a reality that is experienced or known or conceived. In other words, all thought and language can touch and be true of a reality which is given to man's knowledge or experience as an object. Anything that is being aware of or known cannot logically belong to consciousness or awareness, and since all the notions are objects of consciousness they cannot logically belong to it or affect it. That means to talk of anything about the Self is logically impossible and inadmissible, because all that we can know and think and speak of cannot be about the Self though they presuppose or are due to it. We, therefore, cannot even say that the Self is absolute as it is never an object, either of knowledge or of thought, to which something can be attributed or about which something can be said or predicated. To talk of Self as absolute, perfect, unchanging, etc., is to illegitimately transfer certain things which belong to object realm to something which is never an ob-

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ject. When they are applied to an objective reality (*viṣaya*) they can either be true or false, meaningful or unmeaningful or valid or invalid, but cannot simply be applied to Self without misunderstanding the nature of the Self or without making it an object which is impossible. Sāṅkhya philosophy made a significant observation with regard to *prakṛti* by saying that its main defining characteristic is its being an object (*viṣaya*), and puruṣa is that to which the *prakṛti* is an object. To admit all this we need not depend upon *śruti*. Now the distinction between Self or subject in a qualified sense and the non-self or object is intelligible and clear to all, and if we admit this distinction which is radical, we also have to admit the position of Advaita that all that can be said and asserted meaningfully or truly or falsely can be about an object, but not about the Self which by its very nature is never an object. The object may be the world, *jīva*, God, etc., or all that can be known, conceived and spoken of. In this sense of not being touched or affected by any of the definitions and conceptions the Self is absolute which amounts to saying that it is outside or beside all the conceptions and definitions. And if we equate Ātman with Brahman, as they are always used as synonyms both in the *Upaniṣads* and by Śaṅkara, the position of Advaita is irrefutable.

But we are thereby bound to admit a reality other than Self or Brahman to which these notions can belong, and of which the self is aware. If we admit the reality of something other than Self or non-self, as otherwise we cannot even make a distinction between the self and non-self, and consequently deny what is true and valid about non-self to self, or simply talk about Self we have to maintain a position like that of Sāṅkhya and reject Advaita, the central concept of Śaṅkara's philosophy. We may accept the Self as absolute, but therefore we are not free to reject duality and accept Advaita.

Now comes the greatest insight or realisation of the *Upaniṣads* which is fully and properly grasped and represented by Śaṅkara, that the so called non-self (that) is not different from the self. They are not two or are not different. Generally speaking, where people or ordinary knowledge and wisdom see duality and difference, either between man and Reality or between the world and Reality, the Upaniṣadic seers see non-difference or non-duality. And since the *Upaniṣads* are interested primarily in instructing us the truth about the reality which we all experience and know, they

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do it mostly by correcting our imperfect or wrong knowledge of it by pointing out that where we see duality or difference there is in fact no duality or difference. In intention, the basic or major statements of the *Upaniṣads* like "I am Brahman" or "You are that" and "All is Brahman" are meant to convey the same truth by way of correcting the ordinary or empirical knowledge or understanding of man whereby he sees differences which are mostly conceptual. It is also positive discovery in the sense of asserting the identity of all that is there which is Brahman or Ātman. According to Advaita, the non-duality or non-difference is ontological while duality or difference is due to conceptual understanding or simply the construction of human mind. The significance of Advaita is therefore largely negative in the sense that as Reality is self-revealing no instruction is required about it, but it is required to correct the wrong or imperfect understanding of man about the nature of Reality. In other words, duality or difference that is experienced by man empirically is denied or negated so that the identity or oneness that is there is directly seen or realised which is all the while prevented because of man's imperfect or wrong knowledge about it. That means, the intention of the statements like "You are that" is to show that the difference that is generally accepted between the reality that is understood by the term 'You' and the reality indicated by the term 'that' is not there in fact. And the state of non-difference is something that is to be directly realised, but cannot be conceived and expressed in language, as in the process of representing it in language, one cannot but help following the conventions of using language which introduce dualist mode of speech to express that which is non-dual. When the language which is primarily meant to communicate and which presupposes differences is employed to convey a truth which is non-dual or free from all relations and differences, it loses its capacity to express it. And when it is used to convey it, it ends in distorting it. So ordinary language analysis will be of not much help in grasping the meaning of the Upaniṣadic statements expressing the truth of Advaita.

There is another way of understanding the meaning of Advaita which is equally Upaniṣadic and is based on the realisation that the Self which is revealed to man as his own inner self is all-pervasive non-dual reality, or empirically speaking the self of everything that is there, and hence is the same as Brahman, the Upaniṣadic term for Reality. Ātman etymologically means all-

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pervading, like space. Since Self is all-pervasive, like space, its knowledge or realisation must be as all-inclusive or comprehensive as its nature, or nothing should be excluded from such knowledge or realisation. But conceptual understanding of man leads him to grasp the nature of Reality by differentiation and distinction. Another basic insight of Advaita that what we know and experience is Brahman only, whether we are aware of it or not, is vital in understanding the meaning of Advaita. Our knowledge or experience of Brahman, and its Advaitic realisation do not differ radically in the sense both of them have the same reality as their object. What a man ordinarily or empirically knows is Brahman, as Brahman is the only reality that is there objectively or ontologically, and the same is the object of Brahman-realisation by a Brahmajñānin. How then to distinguish ordinary or empirical knowledge of Brahman from the true or perfect knowledge of it realised by the seers? Now we can make a distinction between the two either in terms of the object known or realised or in terms of the knower. As, according to Advaita Brahman's nature is not mutable, or as there is no mutation or change of any kind in the nature of Brahman, either by way of manifestation or modification or evolution or creation, any knowledge of it refers to it, but not to its manifestation or modifications or becoming. We cannot also say that the ordinary knowledge of Brahman refers to it as it is concealed or enveloped by something other than itself, or to an apparent aspect of it, as ontologically speaking there is nothing to cover or conceal Brahman. And as Brahman is homogeneous pure consciousness it has no dimensions or aspects. Moreover, Brahman as consciousness cannot be hidden or concealed or enveloped by anything as in that case the very fact of its concealment cannot be known, for in knowing it consciousness is free from it. As the ideas of concealment and the thing concealed are objects of knowledge or understanding they cannot belong to consciousness, and if on the contrary they belong to it then that very fact cannot be known. And as the nature of Brahman is homogeneous (*ekarasa*), that is, '*prajñānaghana*', like salt water, it cannot have apparent and real natures. Advaitins are therefore against imposing the categories of our understanding, which are derived from our empirical experience and are valid with regard to it, upon the absolute or Brahman, and when it is done, on the other hand, they are found to be meaningless or lead to contradictions, and consequently Advaita

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may have no meaning. Brahman is immutable and impassible and therefore it cannot reveal itself to different persons in different ways. It is known always the same to all, and if there is any difference in its knowledge it is entirely due to knowers. That means ignorant or imperfect way of knowing Brahman and perfect way of knowing it have something to do with the knower. The real distinction between two knowledges of Brahman is due to ignorance and knowledge, and does not mean any change in the nature of Brahman. "Scriptural or ordinary or empirical outlooks towards Reality depend entirely upon knowledge and ignorance."[5] "This unreal phenomenal reality created by differentiation is indeed a fact for those who do not believe in things as different from Brahman as well as for those who do believe."[6] But ordinarily people think that ordinary knowledge of Brahman reveals Brahman as what it is not, while true knowledge reveals Brahman as what it is, or in its true nature, thereby trying to find justification for the difference in knowledge in the reality of Brahman, whereas the Advaitic position is just the opposite. If we try to find justification in Brahman for the difference between ordinary or empirical knowledge of Brahman and its true knowledge, various problems arise which are difficult to surmount. Usually the opponents of Advaita, and also some of the Advaitins take up this position, and find that Advaita as a philosophy is full of unexplained or unexplainable problems, and even contradictions. On the other hand, if we try to find out the reason for the difference in knowledge within the knower then certain major problems, which are otherwise insurmountable, can be avoided in grasping the meaning of Advaita. As the object of knowledge or experience is the same in both the cases, the difference between empirical knowledge of Brahman and its perfect knowledge or realisation is solely due to the mode or way of knowing Brahman. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, it is said that what we know empirically about the Self, or its manifestations at empirical level, is true of Self, but only it is incomplete and hence imperfect, as in knowing it incompletely or imperfectly we do not know it in its true perfection or fullness or completeness (*kṛtsna*).[7] Commenting upon it Śaṅkara says that as long as man knows the Self as such, as possessed of the natural functions and thinks that it sees, hears or touches, he does not really know the whole Self. "Combining all the characteristics, it then becomes the whole. It is as the Reality (*vasturūpeṇa*) that it includes those characte-

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ristics due to the functions of particular limiting adjuncts such as the vital force."[8] Our empirical knowledge or understanding of Brahman or Self is not complete and perfect, as we are discriminative or selective in our approach, and identify Brahman or Self with what we know or understand about it and also would like it to be, and try to define it accordingly. To that extent we exclude something from it, and limit its definition to that extent, whereas a true knower of Brahman or Ātman does not see anything other than itself, and hence there is nothing which can be excluded from Brahman either in knowing it or in defining it. Since Ātman by definition is all-pervasive, like space, there is nothing which is other than itself, and hence its knowledge or realisation must be all-inclusive, or identity with all (*sarvātmaikabhūtam advaitam*). As we normally find opposition between certain ideas, like good and bad, we cannot think them to be true with regard to the same reality, and therefore try to exclude some set of ideas in knowing or understanding the nature of Brahman. And as we identify or define Brahman in terms of certain ideas or concepts we find it difficult to explain the ideas opposed to them and so try to explain them in terms of another reality or in terms of some basic change or modification in the nature of Brahman. But if we see the Reality as transcending the limitations imposed on it by our understanding, which is formed mostly by the empirical experience, the humanly conceived opposition between certain ideas may not be valid in relation to Reality. Śaṅkara says that while day and night are not there in the sun, we try to explain them in terms of the sun. The latter is true in one sense and the former is also true, but the former is no explanation of the latter. Similarly our empirical knowledge of Brahman is true empirically but not in the absolute sense, and there can be no transition from the one to the other, as in reality these are not caused by the Reality. As they are true and valid either from the standpoint of ignorance or incomplete knowledge or true or complete knowledge the transition or movement is in the knower or is meaningful in relation to man. In moving from ignorance to knowledge, or from incomplete to complete knowledge we are not moving from one reality to another. The movement or transition is from ignorance or incomplete or imperfect empirical knowledge to true or complete or perfect knowledge of Reality. The significance in the movement is for the knower or is valid from the point of view of the knower,

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but not in terms of Reality. Either they bind or liberate the knower without in any way affecting the nature of Reality. In reality Brahman or Ātman is all which means there is no reality other than Brahman, and when our knowledge or realisation attains that all-inclusive character or nothing is excluded from our knowledge or conception of Reality, which is however not possible at the level of conceptual knowledge, then our knowledge is true or complete and perfect, and that is Advaita. "Results of knowledge and ignorance are identity with all and identity with finite things."[9] Ignorance represents that which is infinite as finite. "The essential meaning of all the *Upaniṣads* is to remove all finite conceptions about Brahman."[10] In knowing the Self in its manifested forms or as it is known or revealed through its various functions it seemingly performs, our knowledge of the Self is not objective but mental, and when it is known as the Reality (*vasturūpeṇa*) then the knowledge becomes complete. The same thing is said in a different way in a different context by Śaṅkara. It is meaningful to say that one knows all by knowing Brahman as Brahman is all, but how could Brahman know all? Here it is said that Brahman knows all not through any sort of cognitive activity but by its being all. It knows all as it is itself all. Explaining the Upaniṣadic statement that Brahman wanted to create, so it created, Śaṅkara says the desires of Brahman are by nature truth and knowledge, and are pure by virtue of their identity with Brahman. They are not different from Brahman. "The name and form in terms of which things are differentiated are essentially Brahman or are not different from Brahman since they cease to be when Brahman is not there."[11] "Identity with all is the highest state of Ātman's own eternal supreme state." The emphatic assertion of Śaṅkara that in their intention and meaning the basic statements of the *Upaniṣads* like "I am Brahman" or "You are that" and "All is Brahman" are identical, though they may have a different significance to an individual, shows that Advaita means the identity or oneness of all that is there, which is Brahman or Ātman. In realising the oneness of all that is there one cannot exclude one's own reality from such realisation, and such knowledge cannot be of the subject-object type. It is by being Brahman or by being all one knows Brahman or all. The fact that all the major statements of the *Upaniṣads* mean the same thing or intend the same thing shows that in understanding the meaning of Advaita if we depend exclusively on either of the

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statements we fail to grasp the meaning of Advaita. The same idea is expressed in a different way by Śaṅkara when it is said that the dissolution of the world (*pralaya*) as popularly understood and believed is inferior to that which is consciously realised in realising Brahman. The latter is supreme and extreme or radical, and happens when the ignorance or the empirical knowledge of differences is removed or dissolved in Brahman-knowledge. Normally by dissolution we understand the dissolution of all the differences and multiplicity at the time of final dissolution of the world into their cause, and Advaita is also a dissolution in which all the differences and duality are dissolved due to Brahman realisation in which no trace of a reality other than and different from Brahman is experienced. Such conscious realisation of oneness of all that is there is the meaning of Advaita.

This takes us to another central problem as to what is the relation between the various conceptions of Brahman and Brahman itself or between the empirical knowledge of Brahman and its true or perfect knowledge, or if we change the term Brahman to Ātman, as to how Ātman is related to all its functional or empirical manifestations. We may say that Brahman alone is real in the absolute sense, and everything else that is empirically experienced is also real but in a relative or dependent sense. If so, what can be the relation between what is dependently or empirically real and Brahman which is absolutely real? Here again we find that various thinkers who are not in sympathy with Advaita and those who are opposed to it, like the Buddhists, try to understand by Brahman or Ātman a substance, and so think that it should have certain attributes, action, etc., as the notion of substance is unintelligible without having certain attributes. According to this understanding, Brahman as substance may be eternal and remain identical, but it can undergo change or modification in respect of its qualities. But Śaṅkara nowhere uses the term substance for the Self or Brahman, and so we cannot bring in the analogy of substance to understand the nature of Advaitic reality. If at all we are to use an analogy to understand the nature of Brahman, a spiritual reality like Puruṣa (person) is appropriate. Since we cannot use a term without accepting its well accepted meaning, we should not use the term substance to understand Self or Brahman. Can we say that the sun is the substance and light his attribute or fire is the substance and heat its attribute or quality? Although in language, and also for the sake of understand-

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ing we make a distinction between the sun and light, and fire and heat, in reality they are not two and different. One is not related to the other as in the case of a substance and its attributes. We cannot think of any relation between the sun and light and fire and heat as in reality the sun and fire are not different from light and heat. They are not two or are not different. Heat is the nature of fire, and so it cannot in any sense qualify or affect fire, as Śaṅkara puts it. Similarly Brahman or Ātman and 'all' are not different, or are not two. We cannot say that consciousness knows or is aware, as knowing being the nature of consciousness is not different from consciousness. We can think of them as different only when we understand Self as substance which is not however the position of Advaita. But since we think of them as two and hence create a difference between them Advaita teaches that they are not two in reality. As fully developed in Kashmir Śaivism, spiritual reality and its self-expression are in no way related as they are not two. We cannot say that the Self or Brahman is different from its self-expression which is all that is there. As they are not two, there is no meaning in attributing some motive or desire and consequently some change in the nature of Brahman, and for the same reason the world which is the spontaneous self-expression of Brahman cannot affect Brahman in any way. A spiritual reality can never be without self-expression. It is not possible to think of a spiritual reality without its spontaneous self expression which is its nature. They are *abhinna*, the Śāṅkarite expression for their relation if we call that a relation at all. Somehow, we fail to realise this and see them as different, and therefore Advaita teaches them to be non-different in reality. When all is the self-expression of Brahman, to understand and define Brahman in terms of some of its self-expressions is to limit it and consequenly not to know it in its fullness.

Finally, Advaita can also mean the illusoriness of all duality, or the lack of ultimate or objective validity to all metaphysical theories about Reality. In criticising and rejecting final or objective validity to all such theories and doctrines, either propounded by different philosophers or are found in the scriptures, the purpose of Śaṅkara is to show that as conceptions they are merely mental or constructions of human mind, and may have at the most a pragmatic justification and validity. Only in such theories, which presuppose the duality of the world and its cause, some sort of causal explanation is offered for the existence of empirical reality in

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terms of the first cause. In a word, all the metaphysical explanations and views are dualistic and the object of Advaita is to show how they lack objective or ultimate validity. Thus the meaning of Advaita is to show the illusory character or lack of objective validity to all dualistic metaphysics by way of tracing its origin ultimately to the mind and its activity. All duality is mental or conceptual as Śaṅkara at times identifies mind with the conceptual activity of man, whereas Advaita is objective as it is not and cannot be mental as all mental activity presupposes duality. In this connection it is significant to note that *māyā* is also identified with mind by Śaṅkara. Even *nāma* and *rūpa* can be interpreted as the creations or projections of human mind, and can therefore mean the concepts and their expression in language. Mind stands for conceptual activity through which man builds various metaphysical and cosmological theories, and sees differences where they do not exist, as without differences the mind ceases to function. We, therefore, find in Advaita philosophy a rich analysis and understanding of mind and its nature which is aimed at showing how its various creations, though of existential and pragmatic significance to man, do not however have objective validity. Since *māyā* is identified with mind and its conceptual activity, we can grasp the meaning of *māyā* according to Śaṅkara. The concept of *māyā* is not used in the philosophy of Śaṅkara primarily to explain the world process in terms of Brahman, but to explain such explanations, and also to show the mystery ultimately involved in the existence of the world. To think of *māyā* as the explanation of the world process in terms of Brahman is itself an instance of *māyā*. Any metaphysical or cosmological explanation, as explanation, is as good or valid as any other explanation. Only some may be more logical than others. But in the final analysis they all lack objective validity. Therefore, to say that Brahman's nature is dynamic or somehow as the creative power of Brahman, *māyā* is both different and non-different from Brahman, etc., are all metaphysical explanations, and hence will have the same status and validity as any other metaphysical explanation or view. All of them are mental or are the constructions of human mind. In comparison to these explanations experience is valid. The fact that at times we cannot understand and explain an experience does not mean that experience is meaningless. To realise Advaita is to overcome the temptation or urge to explain, and see or be the Reality directly which

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is all the while prevented because of our excessive attachment to various metaphysical views and explanations. Instead of accepting the mystery as to how or why any reality other than Brahman is experienced at all, or how Brahman is seen as the world, if we try to explain it, it is due to *māyā*. *Māyā*, the irresistible urge on the part of man to explain metaphysically the nature of Reality and its relation to the world of empirical experience, can be satisfied or put an end to when the mind ceases to be or ceases to function which is possible by realising its non-difference or oneness with Ātman. When the mind and its operations cease, the urge to create theories, and the various metaphysical theories involving duality come to an end. And unless one is weaned away from the mind and its dualistic creations or projections one cannot realise Advaita, the negation of all duality. Differences and distinctions are due to mind and its activity, and to realise Advaita which is objective is to free oneself from all notions of duality, or transcend mind by seeing its oneness with the Self. As Advaita is the nature of Reality, and hence objective and eternally revealing, nothing is to be done to know or realise it, but some effort is required to overcome the differences which prevent man from seeing or realising Advaita. So philosophically Advaita means negation of all metaphysical theories and views which presuppose duality and are dualistic. This is done when the mind or *māyā* is overcome, as mind itself loses its identity or existence when the duality, its basis, is not there. Advaita means the denial of all dualistic views, the creation of mind or *māyā*, and what is realised thereafter is something that cannot be conceptualised.

NOTES

1. *Gauḍapādakārikā*, 4.100.
2. Śaṅkara's commentary on *Gauḍapādakāriā*, 4.100.
3. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra* 2.2.25.
4. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.4.10.
5. *Ibid.*, 3.5.1.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, 1.4 7.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 4.3.20.
10. *Ibid.*, 2.1.20.
11. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.8.5.

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10

HERMENEUTICS IN THE VEDĀNTA OF ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

S. P. DUBEY

The art of understanding and interpreting a religious text is known as 'hermeneutics'. Earlier it was a discipline restricted to the Biblical studies. But Freidrich Schleiermacher (1768 - 1834) transformed the ancient auxiliary discipline and applied it to the nature and scope of the activity of understanding itself. In his work on the art of understanding Schleiermacher states that hermeneutics is not so much an art of understanding as of avoiding misunderstanding.

Hermeneutics is specifically a Western discipline. In the Western context the discipline is associated with Hermes, the Greek god (son of Zeus and May) treated to be the patron of merchants, the guardian of roads and the messenger of the gods to human beings in their dreams. He pronounces the decisions of regarding truth contained in the revelation. The message has to be understood and the content has to be delineated from the form. Thus hermeneutics became the science and the theory of interpretation whose object is to explain a text proceeding from its features, both objective (grammatical meaning of words and their historical variations), and subjective (the author's intention). It first appeared in the Hellenic period in connection with the study and publication of classical texts (*e.g.*, Homer). Thereafter it developed as exegesis of the scriptures. During the medieval Europe, the Church had claimed to be the sole interpreter of the Scriptures. Against the Catholic claim of the authoritative interpretations of the Bible, the Protestants tried to develop some universally valid rules of scriptural interpretation. Consequently, the science of hermeneutics found some solid base for being treated as an independent discipline.

The 19th century saw the development of 'free' hermeneutics, not confined to any subject or the meaning of a text.

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Schleiermacher distinguished between explanation (based on reasoning) and understanding (based on feeling). His conception of a universal hermeneutics or theory of understanding is based on the realization that the experience of strangeness and alienation (and thus the possibility of mis-understanding), in respect of what is transmitted to us from the past, torn from the world to which it originally belonged, is universally present. The quest of understanding presupposes such a sense of alienation and remoteness from tradition and does not arise so long as we live under its domination unreflectively, or fail to see the novel present as it actually is and claims us. For him the phenomenon of understanding consisted in transporting ourselves into the psychology of an author, through the reproduction in our minds of his original act of creation, through a sort of reversal of the original process of composing, and in the last resort, through a congenial divination of his creative individuality.

With Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) hermeneutics became a specific method in social sciences designated to ensure events' understanding in the life of society through the subjective intentions of historic figures (*cf.* his *Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik*, 1900). Dilthey followed Schleiermacher in regarding understanding as a reproduction of the inner world of experience of another, but was led by his own persistent questioning to overcome the psychologism infecting the earlier view. For him, the human sciences owe their distinctive character to the fact that their procedure is based on the systematic relation between life, or lived experience, expression and understanding. In the year 1900 itself the book on Logic of Understanding of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was published. He contributed a lot to the phenomenology of understanding. For him understanding, and for that matter, philosophizing, denotes a 'completely new kind of attitude of individuals towards their environing world' resulting in a completely new type of spiritual structure.

The ethico-psychological hermeneutics of Schleiermacher was developed by Karl Barth (1886-1968) into 'new hermeneutics' with the publication of the second edition of his commentary on *Romans* (in September, 1921). Barth emphasised on the awareness of interpretation without subjectivity. For him an interpretation should be based on linguistic interpretations of the simple act of reading. Here it matters little whether or not the text belongs to one's own tradition. Hermeneuo is, in fact, to interpret the

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foreign tongue.

In our present context we shall be concerned mainly with the understanding and interpretation of texts which are one of the most important factors for preserving the tradition. As Hans-Georg Gadamer says, "Every age has to understand a text passed down to it from the past in its own way, for it is part of the totality of the tradition, in which that age is materially interested and within which it seeks to comprehend itself." (*cf.* J. L. Mehta's Presidential Address of the Metaphysics & Epistemology section of the Dharwad session (1969) of the Indian Philosophical Congress, entitled 'Understanding and Tradition').

The relation between a text and the reader is very crucial in understanding the contents of the text. This relation could be of three types. It could either be subject-based, or object-based, or subject-object-based. If the author of the text belongs to our contemporary period and also discusses things of our own midst, there is not much difficulty in understanding the meaning of the text. But when one has to deal with a text which belongs to a remote past and the subject-matter not very familiar, the task becomes difficult. The spatio-temporal distances make factual verifications awfully tedious. The task becomes more difficult when the text is religious, as it deals with intangible, rather divine, forms of reality. But when the text belongs to some other religion, the task of understanding becomes further difficult and complicated. It requires an unprejudiced, objective and appreciative treatment of the subject; perhaps a healthy blending of religiography and religiology.

When we interpret a religious text we are in search of the meaning of a statement. This meaning cannot be obtained simply by knowing the dictionary-meaning of the terms or phrases. As Schleiermacher held, we have to read the mind of the author for knowing the meaning of the statement. But the point is, can we read the mind of the author without mixing up ours with his? Further, even if the original mind is read and the essential meaning of the text obtained, will that be of any use to the reader or the author standing several hundred years away? And even if the text is understood and proved to be useful to the present, what difference would it make to the future generation or to people belonging to other faiths? Such questions, and many more like these, crop up when we discuss hermeneutical interpretations of religious texts. It is neither necessary nor possible to make an

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attempt to answer all such questions. Our purpose here is to see how the Indian schools of thought, especially the Advaita of Śaṅkara, have attempted to understand and interpret the classical texts.

A word about the relationship between understanding and interpretation before we go to apply hermeneutics to Indian studies. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), in his *Being and Time*, holds that interpretation is grounded on understanding and is only the explicit cultivation and carrying through of the latter. For Gadamer understanding is an ingression into the process of tradition into which the past and the present are continuously mediated. The predecessors of Schleiermacher spoke about the circularity of understanding or the hermeneutic circle whereby they suggested that the parts of a text must be understood in the context of the whole and the whole in the light of the parts. When the Mīmāṁsā talks of the *prakaraṇa* (context) in the set of rules of interpretation of the Vedic texts, the discussion is anticipated. The marvel of understanding consists in the achievement of agreement between oneself and another, or coming to an agreement with another, in respect of the content of a text, through the unending circular interplay between the implicit presuppositions with which we read a text and the meaning which it conveys to us. The meaning of a text usually surpasses and overflows its author. Understanding is, therefore, not merely reproductive. It contains an element of creative productivity as well.

Vedānta proper finds its ultimate sanction in the Vedic texts. In interpreting the texts, Vedānta in general, and Śaṅkara in particular, make use of the logical method of the Nyāya system and the exegetical method of the Mīmāṁsā school. The impact of the latter system on the Vedānta is visibly much more than that of the former so far as the interpretation of the Vedic texts is concerned. In fact, for all practical purposes, the Vedānta accepts the tenets of the Mīmāṁsā, especially of the Kumārila branch, hence the statement: "*vyavahāre bhāṭṭa-nayaḥ*." We shall briefly look into the two schools in the context.

The Nyāya system prescribes four conditions for obtaining the correct meaning of a sentence, *viz.*, expectancy (*ākaṅkṣā*), fitness (*yogyatā*), proximity (*sannidhi*), and intention (*tātparya*). The last one is the most important condition. We have to read the mind of the author to know the meaning.

The Mīmāṁsā school has developed the art of interpreting

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the texts. In fact the term 'hermeneutics' could be easily translated into our tradition as '*mīmāṁsā*' (feminine gender; *mān san a*; standing for reflection, profound thinking, discussion, consideration, logical examination of the texts, investigation). Among the six auxiliary sciences (Vedāṅgas, see Kumārila's *Tantra-vārttika*), Nirukta (philological exegetics), Vyākaraṇa (grammar) and Chandaḥ (prosody) are notable.

The Mīmāṁsakas have propounded a set of six rules to ascertain what is auxiliary to what in the process of their interpretation of the Vedic texts. They are: (1) *veda* or *śruti*, direct assertions, explicit statements, (2) *liṅga*, indirect indication, implication, (3) *vākya*, syntactical connection, (4) *prakaraṇa*, context, (5) *sthāna*, *krama*, order of sequence or place, position, and (6) *samākhyā*, name. Which of these is to be regarded as most authoritative in a case where two or more of these are applicable, but in conflict with one another? The answer has been provided by the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra* III. 3.14: Among, these, that which follows is weaker than that which precedes; because it is more remote from the final objective. And *dharma* is the grand final objective of the Mīmāṁsakas. If a text does not pertain to *dharma* (ritualistic activity, also known as *karma* (or *yajña*), it is nothing but an explanatory statement.

The impact of the Mīmāṁsā rules of interpretation of the texts on Śaṅkara is obvious. In his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* (III. 3.31) he refers to the condition of the context (*prakaraṇa*): *prakaraṇasya niyāmakatvāt*. In his commentary on the *Sūtra* I.3.14 Śaṅkara puts emphasis on the Mīmāṁsā theory (as found in the *Jaimini Sūtra* (I.4.29) that the meaning of an ambiguous sentence is to be ascertained from what follows in the context: "*uttarebhyo vākya-śeṣagatebhyo hetubhyaḥ*." In his commentary on the *Sūtra* I.4.3. Śaṅkara says a good deal about Kumārila's theory (see *Śloka vārttika* on the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, I.1.4) that so long as a sentence can be taken as one syntactical unit, it is not proper to split it up (...*ekavākyatādhīnatvādarthapratipatteḥ*).

However, Śaṅkara differs from the Mīmāṁsakas as regards the goal. For the Mīmāṁsakas, as said above, the goal is *dharma*; his is an inquiry into the nature of Brahman, which is an accomplished fact (*kūṭastha-nitya*). Since the Upaniṣadic portions of the Vedas, usually known as the Vedānta, deal with the subject-matter of Brahman, they are rated higher. If other non-Upaniṣadic portions of the Vedas deal with the knowledge of Brahman,

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they are also treated as important by the Ācārya. But no portion of the Vedic text is rejected by him altogether.

There is a remarkable difference between Śaṅkara and the Mīmāṁsakas as regards the ultimacy of the Vedas. Unlike the Mīmāṁsakas (and the Semitic tradition), the Advaitism of Śaṅkara considers scriptural knowledge as a lower value (*aparā vidyā*). The scriptures are not the sole means of spiritual knowledge. Śaṅkara holds that the scriptural texts on the one hand, and intuition etc., on the other, are to be had recourse to, as per the situation and the occasion. This is so, first, because the object of enquiry is an accomplished fact and, secondly, because intuition is the final result of an enquiry into Brahman (see Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, I.1.2). He, further, states that no intelligent person disregards his experience (*Ibid.*, II.2.28: *na ca svānubhavāpalāpaḥ...kartum*). He also maintains that the scripture is the authority for the knowledge of the Self (*Ātman*) because it removes ignorance, and not because it makes us know something that is unknown (see Śaṅkara on the *Bhagavadgītā*, II.18: *śāstraṁ tu...ajñātārtha jñāpakaṁ*).

The relative value of the scripture is exhibited in Śaṅkara's works in unambiguous terms. For him knowledge of texts, analysed by reason and supported by experience, is able to provide the knowledge of the ultimate reality. The *words* are, undoubtedly, a great help towards the realisation of the ultimate. But, as we know, mere prescription does not remove suffering We have to consume correct medicine prescribed. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (II.4.v) clearly states that we have to reflect upon and meditate on the nature of reality after hearing about it from the scriptures: "*ātmā vā're draṣṭavyaḥ, śrotavyaḥ, mantavyaḥ nididhyāsitavyaḥ*."

The scripture itself, Śaṅkara points out, recognizes its own relative nature. In the *Muṇḍaka* (I.l.iv) and in the *Chāndogya* (VII.l.ii-iii) the relative character of scriptural knowledge is clearly admitted. In the former *Upaniṣad*, Aṅgiras tells Śaunaka that the knowers of Brahman declare two kinds of knowledge to be known: the higher and the lower. The lower one includes the Vedas etc., and the higher one is that by which the undecaying is apprehended. In the latter Upaniṣad, Sage Nārada tells his brother Sanatkumāra that even after learning the Vedas and all the sciences he simply feels to be a *mantra-vid* (learned person; a man of action, according to Śaṅkara, a *mantra-vid* is a *karma-vid* and obviously cannot claim to be the *ātma-vid*, the knower of the Self) because

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he (Nārada) has been told that the knower of the Self does not grieve, whereas he is still under grief.

The doctrine of the self-validity of the *Vedas*, known as the *svataḥ-prāmāṇya vāda*, is upheld by Śaṅkara. According to him the *Vedas* do not require anything else for their luminosity, as is the case with the sun (*cf.* Śaṅkara's *bhāyṣa* on *Brahmasūtra*, II.l.i: *vedasya hi nirapekṣaṁ svārthe prāmāṇyam*). But it must be noted here that the authority of the scripture is recognised in the non-perceivable realms only which could not be comprehended otherwise. So far as the phenomenal spheres are concerned, they do not depend on the scriptures for their authenticity. Even if hundreds of texts declare the fire to be cold or without light, they cannot be relied upon. In case there is such a conflict between the scripture and the percepts, Śaṅkara holds, one will have to interpret the text as conveying some sense (see *SB* on the *BG*, 18.66: *arthāntaraṁ śrutervivakṣitaṁ kalpyam*). Otherwise the same will go against the law of contradiction. He notes that the same thing cannot be the locus of opposite qualities like hot and cold (see *SB* on *BS*, II.ll.33: *na hyekasmin dharmiṇi...śītoṣṇavat*), and the law of identity expects things to have their own nature (see his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.iv.6: *na ca svābhāviko dharma eva nāsti*).

Although the scripture is authentic in extra-sensible sphere, it does not give us immediate reality. The scriptural statement regarding the real is merely name which is a modification of reality and arises from the speech (*Chāndogya Up.* VI.1.4: *vācarambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyam*). Those who meditate on the name as Brahman become independent in so far as the name goes, but there is something greater than the name (the greatest of all, the *bhūmā* of the *Chāndogya Up.* VII.l.5), and that can be realized in experience only.

Between the scriptural knowledge and experience the use of reasoning (*manana*) is prescribed by the scripture itself. The scripture makes use of reasoning for its help (see *SB* on *BS*, I.1.2: *śrutyaiva ca sahāyatvena tarkasyābhyupetatvāt*). Inthe well-known expression of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III.iv.5) the seeing of the Self is possible only through hearing, reasoning and meditating. Hearing, for Śaṅkara, includes the scripture as well as the words of the teachers (*śrotavyaḥ pūrvamācāryataḥ āgamataśca*). *Manana* means intellect or reasoning (*cf. Chānd.Up.*VII.13.i: *matirmananam tarko mantavyaviṣaya ādaraḥ*) for him. Unless a person is well-versed in scriptures

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as well as in matters of logic, one cannot be competent even to classify the subject-matters of scriptural statements (Ś. on *Bṛ.Up.* IV.xv.5: *pariniṣṭhita śāstra-buddhibhireva*). Śaṅkara cites the famous Upaniṣadic text wherein use of reason is admitted by the scripture and endorses the position that only an intelligent person can reach the destination after hearing from the scripture, as the kidnapped person reaches Gāndhāra after hearing from the reliable source (*Chānd. Up.* VI.14.2: *paṇḍito medhāvī gāndhārānevopapadyate*).

Śaṅkara recommends as well as applies reason for clarification of scriptural statements. He also suggests that if there is any difficulty in determining the meaning of a text, the pseudo-meaning should be eliminated and subsequently the proper meaning could be obtained with the help of reasoning (*ŚB* on *BS*, II.1.ii *śrutyartha-vipratipattau*). Reason may be regarded as a tool for making the distinction between what is real and what is not real (see *ŚB* on *Kaṭha Up.* VI. 12: *buddhirhi naḥ pramāṇaṁ sadasatoḥ*). Śaṅkara admits that one reason could be superseded by another. But if we try to negate reason itself, this would bring the whole course of human life to an end (*ŚB*, *BS*, II. 1. 11: *sarvatarkāpratiṣṭhāyāṁ ca lokavyavahāroccheda-prasaṅgaḥ*). Total elimination of reason is an impossibility for him.

Reason, thus, is treated to be an important tool for bringing out the correct meaning of the scriptural statements. But it must be clearly noted that it has not been given any independent authority. It could be relied upon when supported by scripture (*ŚB*, *BS*, II. 1.6: *śrutyanugṛhīta eva hyatra tarko*). If reason does not take scripture to be its base, it would be unfounded (*Ibid.*, II. 1. xi: *nāgamagamyarthe kevalena tarkeṇa*). Reason and experience together are in a position to determine the purport of the scripture.

It must also be noted here that neither free rationalism nor complete dogmatism could attract Śaṅkara in his understanding of the scripture. Against pure rationalism he would say that Reality is beyond intellect and the Self is virtually the witness of our intellect (*Gītā-bhāṣya*, IV. 42: *buddheḥ paratastu sa buddherdṛṣṭā parātmā*). Against dogmatism he would maintain that our intellect is the only tool for making distinction between the real and the non-real. He is also not prepared to concede to any speculation which is against the scripture as well as reasoning, howsoever important that may be. He boldly states that even the words of the Sāṅkhyas, the Kāṇādas, the Buddhists and the Mīmāṁsakas

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cannot be respected because they are devoid of authority as well as reasoning (*Upadeśa-sāhasrī*, XVI, 64-5).

In order to arrive at a proper conclusion regarding the true meaning of any scriptural statement, Śaṅkara would prefer to make use of his own reasoning rather than follow the *Smṛtis* (Codes of Law) which claim to deal with the subject-matter of liberation. According to him scripture is the direct means of knowledge. It does not require any other means for its validity. *Smṛtis*, on the other hand, are indirect means of knowledge and are like inference (*ŚB*, *BS*, I, 111.29: *pratyakṣam śrutiḥ anumānam smṛtiḥ*). He is very well aware of the fact that people who take the authors of these codes in high esteem would not be trusting their own rational explanation because they depend on others for their wisdom (*Ibid.*, II. 1.1: *paratantra prajñāstu*). Why are the *Smṛtis* less reliable? Because they are based on memory and not on reasoning.

One of the best instances of Śaṅkara's hermeneutical acumen can be found in his commentary on the fourth aphorism of the *Brahma-sūtra*(*tattu samanvayāt*) which deals with the harmony of the scriptural texts. He abides by all the conditions of the five-points advanced by the Mīmāṁsakas for discussion on any topic (*adhikaraṇa*), namely, proposition, doubt, opponent's view, refutation and the established end (*viṣayo viśayaścaiva pūrvapakṣastathottaram, nirṇayaśceti siddhāntaḥ śāstre'dhikaraṇaṁ smṛtam*). Let us see, briefly, the discussion on the subject.

The subject or the proposition (*viṣaya*) is authoritativeness of scripture as the right means of knowledge of the Absolute (*brahmaṇaḥ śāstrapramāṇakatvam*, *ŚB*, *BS*. I. 1.iv), as stated in the previous aphorism. The doubt arises as to whether the Vedānta passages refer to activities pertaining, if not to rituals, to devout meditation (*upāsanā*) and similar actions mentioned in those very texts. If the case be such, then the scripture cannot be taken to be the source of knowledge of *Brahman* (*svavākyagatopāsanādi-karma paratvam*, *Ibid.*). The opponent's view (*pūrva-pakṣa*) here is that the scriptural statements pertain to ritualistic activities only and the texts which do not do so are without any sensible meaning (*Jaimini Sūtras*, I.2.i: *āmnāyasya kriyārthatvāt ānarthakyam atadarthānām*). Śaṅkara expresses his surprise and notes that even those persons who are fully acquainted with the object of the *Vedas* declare that its purpose is to be seen as injunction for action. He emphasizes that the expression '*tu*' (but) in the aphorism under

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discussion is meant to rebut the opponent's view. He maintains that Brahman is known from the Vedānta (or the Upaniṣadic) part of the scripture because in all these texts the sentences construe the same purport and indicate the same subject-matter, namely, Brahman. He holds that an action is done either in order to obtain something or to modify a thing or to get rid of something. But the case of Brahman is not so. Its knowledge does not depend on any person's endeavour (*na puruṣatantram brahmaviḍyā*). The scripture clearly states that the one who knows Brahman becomes Brahman (*Muṇḍaka Up.* III. 2.8: *Brahma veda Brahmaiva bhavati*). It may be noted here that in Śaṅkara's epistemological realism knowledge is not a mental activity (see *ŚB* on *BS*, I.1.iv: *jñānam nāma mānasī kriyā na*). He further states that knowledge of *Brahman* does not depend on the subject (person), but on the object, like that of a post (*Ibid.* I.1.ii: *sthāṇureveti tattvajñānaṁ vastutantratvāt*). All injunctions, and all other means of knowledge, according to Śaṅkara, end with the cognition expressed in Great Sentences like 'I am Brahman' (*Ibid.*, I.1.iv: *tasmādahaṃ brahmāsmītyetat*).

Śaṅkara clarifies the doubt regarding actions pertaining to devout meditation also. He says that if knowledge of absolute unity has arisen, then there is nothing to be desired or to be avoided. And in such a case the concept of duality which helps us in our efforts to distinguish actions, agents and the like, is destroyed (*ibid.*, *nanu tathā brahmopāsanāvidhiśeṣatvaṁ sambhavati*).

After his reply to the opponent's view and the clarification of doubts Śaṅkara establishes his own view. He says: "It follows that...the doctrine that, on account of the uniform meaning of the Vedānta texts, an independent Brahman is to be admitted, is hereby fully established (*Ibid.*, *samanvayāditi siddham*). He also justifies the independent treatment of the Brahman-knowledge by the author of the *Vedānta-sūtras*. He maintains that, as the comprehension of Brahman (or the Self) has not been propounded in the *Dharma-sūtras* (namely, the ritualistic texts like the *Mīmāṁsā-sūtras*), it is quite appropriate that a new system (*śāstra*) with the expressed objective to establish the identity of Brahman and the Ātman, be formulated (*Ibid.*, I.1.ii.: *brahmātmaikyāvagatiḥ...śāstrārambhaḥ*).

After this brief consideration of the nature of hermeneutical methodology in general and of Śaṅkara's treatment of the scriptural statements in particular, we may make a couple of conclud-

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ing remarks. We may say that in the hermeneutics of Śaṅkara we find a fine blending of three major factors, *viz.*, the scripture, experience and reasoning. These three strands make a strong thread that joins the Vedāntic statements for the unified end of the realisation of the one Reality without a second (*ekamevā'dvitīyam*).

Of the three elements of the methodology of Śaṅkara the first and the last, namely, scripture and reasoning, are common to all types of hermeneutics. For any understanding and interpretation of the text we have to make use of the scripture and reasoning. What seems to be distinctive in Śaṅkara, and for that matter in some other philosophical systems of our country, is the emphasis on experience. Śaṅkara categorically says that the knowledge of Brahman has to find its culmination in the experience of Brahman (*Ibid.*, *brahmānubhavāvasānatvāt brahma-jñānasya*). It may be pointed out, here, that the interpretation of a text is not for its own sake. Not even a dull person does an act without any purpose (*prayojanamanuddiśa na mando'pi pravarttate*). The interpretation is for clarifying our notion of the nature of the Absolute. Further, the endeavour is not to refute other systems without having a position of one's own, as one finds in the Mādhyamika school which claims to have no hypothesis (*pratijñā*). Śaṅkara refutes other systems mainly on the basis of their own accepted principles, thus showing contradiction in those systems. It is done mainly in order to strengthen the conviction of one's own followers (*niṣṭhā-dṛḍhatā*). The positive purpose of the interpretation of the Vedāntic texts, for Śaṅkara, as stated earlier, is the realisation of the unity between Brahman and the Self.

It may be stated here that Śaṅkara is neither a subjectivist nor an objectivist of the extreme nature in his treatment of the scripture. In practice, perhaps, no treatment of a text could either be purely subjective or entirely objective. Śaṅkara's epistemological realism provides an occasion for an objective treatment of the ultimate reality. But, so far as the interpretation of the Vedic texts is concerned, one can take into account the personal convictions of the interpreter or the commentator. A commentary (*bhāṣya*) is supposed to explain even those factors that remained un-expressed in the original text. Puṇyarāja, an eleventh century commentator on the *Vākya-padīya* of Bhartṛhari, says that a commentary is not only an elucidation of the grammatical constructions; it is the clarification of the issues in their entire dimensions (*cf.* his comm. on *VP*, 2.485).

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From the above considerations it is obvious that Śaṅkara, in his commentaries on the triple texts, steers clear between dogmatism and scepticism. His interpretation is based on reason and experience. In fact, his interpretation of the texts, by and large, still remains the guide-line for most of the speculative minds in our country and abroad.

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PART II

ŚAṄKARA AND OTHER SYSTEMS

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11

"BĪJA" ACCORDING TO ŚAṄKARA AND BUDDHISM

ALEX WAYMAN

For Śaṅkara's views on *Bīja* ('seed') I restrict myself to his commantary on the *Brahmasūtras*. On the side of Buddhism, some studies of my own will start the comparison.

I. *Śaṅkara on Bīja*

I have taken 15 instances of *bīja* references from the word index to Śaṅkara's commentary published at Madras.[1] Those accepted in the first *adhyāya* are one on 4,2; two on 4,3 Those in the second *adhyāya* are one each on 1,14; 1,23; 1,35; 1,36; 2,26; 2,28; 3,31. Those in the third *adhyāya* are one each on 1,20; 2,9; 2,32. Those in the fourth *adhyāya* are one each on 1,15; 2,8. Two of the references in the second *adhyāya*, namely on 2,26 and 2,28, are in the Brahmasūtra section devoted to refutation of Buddhism. I have grouped the 15 references into two sets: (A) the seed itself, and how to get rid of it; and (B) the seed as an antecedent condition, namely, for a shoot.

(A) *The Seed Itself*

1. On III. 1, 20, the commentary uses *bīja* as a birthplace, egg, etc. It seems that the term *bīja* when used generally could stand for any birthplace.[2]

2. In the course of explaining the *sūtra* 1,4,3, that due to the destruction of the 'seed power' (*bījaśakti*) there is no return of liberated beings, the commentary presents some alternate references to this seminal condition. It is said to be the nature of nescience (*avidyā*) and called the 'unmanifest' (*avyakta*), have the highest lord (*parameśvara*) for a substratum (*āśraya*). Sometimes it is referred to as 'space' (*ākāśa*) and as the 'incessant' (*a-kṣara*), as when Śaṅkara cites the *Bṛ.Up.*, III, 8,11: "Gārgi, you should know (*khalu*) that in this incessant is space the woof and warp." And he cites the *Śve.Up.*, IV, 10, for the verse quarter "know then that *prakṛti* is the illusion (*māyā*) and that the Great Lord

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(*maheśvara*) owns the *māyā*." Thus it is also called *prakṛti* and *māyā*.[3] Various ones of these alternate names can be rationalized as implicating birthplaces, starting of course with the 'seed' which is the primary birthplace. 'Space' is the place for all formations. And while the 'incessant' with the Sanskrit *a-kṣara* does not immediately indicate a place, the homonym *akṣara*, meaning 'syllable', does mean a place — the heart, throat, or wherever else is located the 'syllable'. Again, while *māyā* is properly rendered "illusion", this craft or magic show takes place somewhere. Also 'nescience' (*avidyā*) is somewhere and in many places.[4]

3. This emphasis on a place is also found in Śaṅkara's comment on II, 1, 23. Here he mentions that there are all sorts of variegations of leaves, flowers, fruit, perfume, and taste from seeds that are located in a single plot of ground (*ekapṛthivī-vyapāśraya*). This suggests the unpredictability of the seed's potentiality, at least the ordinary persons can manage. And this unpredictability is due to the great possible variety of results from those seeds, in the same plot of ground.

4. The theory of calling the seed 'incessant' (*a-kṣara*) is illustrated in the comment on *sūtra* II, 2,26. Here the 'incessant' is identified with the 'own nature' (*svarūpa*). For here Śaṅkara says: Among which seeds, the destruction of the own nature is supposed (*lakṣyate*), yonder previous condition among them that is destroyed, is denied to be the instrumental cause of the latter condition, because agreeing that there is an instrumental cause of shoots belonging to parts of seeds that are not destroyed and are successive."[5] The point is that while the seed changes in order to issue the shoot, some part of the seed (its own nature) must remain or else it would not issue its characteristic shoot, blossoms, fruit, and the like; as *e.g.* an acorn must grow into an oak tree and nothing else, if it indeed sprouts and grows. Thus the own nature agrees with the term *a-kṣara*, previously mentioned. This supposedly opposes the Buddhist position.

5. The 'incessant' nature of the seed is explained as its 'virility' (*puṃstva*) in the comment on II,3,31. Here he speaks of the virility existing in the manner of a seed (*bījātma*) in the child, which does not fail to exist subsequently because it shows up in manifest form in the youth.

6. But then Śaṅkara claims that it is the *jīva* which is continuous when he comments on III, 2,9: "Given that there is this limiting adjunct (*upādhi*) by the principle of seed and shoot (res-

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pectively) of sleep and waking, it logically follows that it is this phenomenal self (*jīva*) which awakens from sleep."[6]

7. Śaṅkara refers to the continuity as "remaining state of seed" (*bījabhāvāvaśeṣa*) in his comment on *sūtra* IV, 2,8, insisting on the continuity of the seed during dreamless sleep and even during the *pralaya* (night of the universe). Then he says that a being is bound to those conditions as long as he lacks right knowledge (*samyagjñāna*).

8. This 'right knowledge' is symbolized as a fire in various places of the commentary. Thus on the *sūtra* III, 3,22, he claims that this destruction of the seed by the fire of knowledge is alluded to in *Chāndogya Up.*, VII, 26,2, *smṛtilambhe sarvagranthīnāṁ vipramokṣaḥ*. The translation in Radhakrishnan's *The Principal Upaniṣads* renders this, "When memory remains firm, there is release from all knots of the heart." However, it would help Śaṅkara's point if the word *smṛti* — which of course does mean 'memory' — were tranlated as it frequently signifies in Buddhist texts, 'mindfulness', *i.e.* not forgetting, namely, the supramundane knowledge. So instead of "When memory remains firm," it should go "When one holds to mindfulness,..."

9. On the difficult *sūtra* IV, 1, 15, Śaṅkara has to deal with the problem of works (*karma*) and the knowledge (*jñāna*), here also compared to fire, which depends on the aggregate of works. Here he has to admit that even when the fire of knowledge destroys the seeds in a particular place, *i.e.* of some person, not all seeds are destroyed, namely those which have already sprouted at the time will have to run their course, up to the death of the body, like the potter's wheel which once set in motion will continue until it comes to rest. Now this involves a difficult consideration, since what is intended to be destroyed by the fire of knowledge is the 'seminal power' (*bījaśakti*), reminding us of the 'virility' (*puṃstva*) of the seed, mentioned above. It was held that this seminal power is 'incessant' (*a-kṣara*). Thus, the claim to be able to destroy this seminal power of the seed, whose potentialities are unknown, while unable to destroy this power of the sprouted seed, which has exhibited in outward form, seems to limit this fire of knowledge. Yet, it would have to be acknowledged that even when the fire of knowledge destroys the seeds of one person, *i.e.* in a certain locus, it does not affect the seeds of other persons, *i.e.* who are elsewhere, except possibly by example.

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B. *Seed as Antecedent Condition*

10. On II, 1, 36, defending the beginninglessness of the world, Śaṅkara uses the example of seed and its shoot to show what is meant. That is to say, there is no shoot without a preceding seed; but also, without a shoot there would be no seeds, so it is a beginningless series. Thus he presents a theory of *karma* that one could not be born without merit and demerit, and without a body one could not form merit and demerit. This shows clearly that the Hindu theory of *karma* is bound up with the theory of transmigration, which can be traced back to the old Upaniṣads, but not to the old Vedas, since while even the Varuṇa hymns had passages that illustrate a kind of *karma* theory, there was not the transmigration side; and so what we now have as the *karma* theory was not Vedic, as far as any textual evidence will demonstrate.

11. But there was the thorny challenge of II, 1, 35, that in the antecedent condition, *i.e.* before the manifoldness of the world, there was no distinction of such things as merit and demerit. And so how can one account for such distinctions showing up in the manifoldness? Śaṅkara replies that just like the seed and the shoot, merit and inequality are both causes and caused; and that is how one explains the situation.

12. But a somewhat different situation is found in *sūtra*, II, 1, 14. Here Śaṅkara's comment is quite long, since the *sūtra* asserts a non-difference between the highest Brahman as cause and the manifold world as effect. Here he cites the *Śve. Up.* VI, 12: "The one controller ... who makes the one seed manifold" (*eko vaśī ... ekam bījam bahudhā karoti*). The cited passage is somewhat relevant but does not necessarily support the *sūtra*. If one is to argue that the one seed is after all not different from its manifold condition then how can his argument under *sūtra* IV, 1, 15, exposed above in my paragraph 9, be valid, for there he defends the position that the fire of knowledge can destroy the unsprouted seed but not the one that is sprouted, thus defending a difference between the 'one seed' and its 'manifold' state.

13. Besides, on I, 4, 2, he cites the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* (I, 4, 7), "Now all this was then unseparated (*avyākṛta*)"; and explains that the moving world (*jagat*) with its distinctions of 'name' (*nāma*)and 'formation' (*rūpa*) was preceded by a condition of 'seminal power' (*bījaśakti*), which was unseparated.

14. Śaṅkara, for his other *bīja* passage on *sūtra* 1, 4, 3, admits that the Sāṅkhya school alludes to this situation of the unsepa-

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rated *bīja* as, proof of its *pradhāna*, the antecedent condition of the world. Then Śaṅkara, expectedly, denies this contention by arguing that the antecedent condition which the *sūtra* intends is not independent, as is the Sāṅkhya *pradhāna*, but necessitates the supreme lord (*parameśvara*).

15. Śaṅkara, in his long comment on the *sūtra* II.2.28, attempting to refute some unnamed school of Buddhism, admits that the opponent also accepts that the seed gives rise to the plant, and that the plant in turn gives rise to the seed. But then Śaṅkara claims that this seeming agreement is not the case since the opponent denies the existence of external things. Śaṅkara must have realized that his own position of 'illusion' (*māyā*) could have been also deemed to deny externals.

II. *Buddhism on "Bīja"*

There is much more said in Buddhist texts on the 'seed' issue than could ever be encompassed in a few pages. Here I shall limit the discussion to issues raised by Śaṅkara's important comments on the *Brahmasūtras* as were presented above, and some others.

Two of the above numbered paragraphs, nos. 4 and 15, were on the *sūtras* devoted to refutation of Buddhism.

As to Śaṅkara on II, 2, 28 (my para. 15), the present writer has in his many years of studying Buddhism never found a Buddhist school that itself denies the existence of externals, *i.e.*, apart from what adversaries and rivals attribute to it. Thus, usually this theory is attributed to a Buddhist school using the expression *vijñaptimātra* (representation only), as though what is taken as the external is just a representation of the mind. My study of this position, which also uses the expression *ālayavijñāna* (store consciousness), has not found a denial of external existence; but rather that this school claims that perception superimposes a kind of lie upon externals; and claims that this position agrees with ancient Buddhism's mistrust of the external senses. This school insists that truth is attained by meditation on the reflected image (*pratibhāsa*) of the externally accepted appropriate object — hence not denying its existence — and that success on this meditative object in the mind by procedures set forth in Buddhist manuals amounts to seeing that entity as it really is. So it is a theory that truth is found within rather than without.

But the Yogācāra admittedly expounds as though there were no external object for the perception. Curiously, what is meant can be illustrated by the Vedānta comments on the *Brahmasūtra*.

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Take this II,2,28, ostensibly refuting the Yogācāra. We notice that the comments by Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva, are remarkably diverse and contradictory.[7] Therefore, if we grant that the original *sūtra* — the external object in this case — was necessary for such comments, the stipulation is not in terms of a 'seed' (*bīja*). This is because a seed has characteristic fruit, etc.; and so if a *sūtra*-seed could grow into the Śāṅkara commentary, it could not possibly grow into the Rāmānuja, etc., commentaries. Now a seed was previously observed as a birthplace; but we should also notice that a place is not necessarily a birthplace. The Vedānta would then insist, and we would all agree, that the Vedānta commentaries are indeed *on* that *sūtra*. Notice that the comments are on that *sūtra* as a *place* rather than as a *birthplace*. Therefore, the Vedānta commentaries in relation to the *sūtra* is not to be described by the ablative, but by the locative case (or by a suitable equivalent, sometimes the accusative case).

These considerations should enable us to appreciate the Yogācāra analysis of the situation. The true object is only a place, and perception makes up of it a report as though derived from it (indicated in grammar by the ablative), but actually attributing to it (locative or accusative case). So as Vasubandhu and other Yogācāra authors assert: the same river that man deems too dirty to drink, the animals regard as clean enough to drink, while the gods see it glistening like lapis lazuli.[8] Thus, when the Yogācāra denies that man's objective river exists, it is because this school claims that the seeds (*bīja*) are internal, in a kind of store (*ālaya*) and so the external is a *place* subjected to superimimpositions. In a way, this corresponds to human intellectual experience, as shown by the diverse Vedānta comments on the *Brahmasūtra* — in fact, products of the diverse lineages carried on by the minds of these Vedānta commentators while they all claimed it was what the external object, the *sūtra*, meant; as though the *sūtra* itself was informing the respective comments.

As for the other *sūtra*, II, 2, 26, supposedly refuting a Buddhist school (my para. 4), again we see a reliance on the grammatical ablative, starting with the *sūtra* itself, *nāsato 'dṛṣṭatvāt*. Now it has been shown that Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their respective commentaries take the opponent to be the realist Buddhist, while Madhva takes the opponent as the Śūnyavāda, *i.e.* Mādhyamika.[9] It is curious that while a Buddhist school is charged with teaching that an existent can come from a non-existent, this very teach-

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ing seems to be in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. Thus, Śaṅkara himself, as I pointed out in my para. 2, uses the expression 'space' (*ākāśa*) as a synonym for the 'seed power' (*bījaśakti*). And since this 'seed power' is indeed a birthplace, to call it 'space' suggests the same for the *ākāśa*. That *ākāśa* is also 'void' (*śūnya*), agrees with what is said in the *Bṛ. Up.*, to which Śaṅkara appealed for the *ākāśa* identification (there, at *Bṛ Up.* III, 8, 11). For so does this *Bṛ. Up.* I, 2, 1, assert: "There was nothing whatsoever here in the beginning" (*naiveha kiñcanāgra āsīt*). "By death indeed was this covered, or by hunger, for hunger is death" (*mṛtyunaivedam āvṛtam āsīt, aśanāyayā, aśanāyā hi mṛtyuḥ*). "He created the mind, thinking, 'let me have a self'(mind)" (*tan mano'kuruta, ātmanvī syām iti*). According to this, the mind (or self) came from death, or nothingness. Śaṅkara himself on *Brahmasūtra* I, 1, 20, cites the line, *ākāśavat "sarvagataś ca nityaḥ"* (Like space he is omnipresent, eternal). And on *Brahmasūtra* I, 2, 23, calls this Lord the Hiraṇyagarbha (golden egg), citing the *Ṛgvedasaṁhitā* X, 121, 1. So he is willing to ascribe the *bījaśakti* to this omnipresent Lord, who is also referred to as death.

Passing to the realist Buddhist in his Abhidharma literature we find that only the Four Great (elements), to wit, fire, wind, water, earth, entered into the generation of the body. Space (*ākāśa*) was not called a *mahābhūta* because it is merely the space in which generation takes place. But this realist Buddhist school also takes the position of common experience that a thing must disappear in a place in order that something else develop there. We see this all the time, that developers tear down an old building and put up a new one. It is not that the new building arose from (ablative) a non-existence, but it did arise *after* an empty space was furnished. The same can be said of the 'stream of consciousness'. It is common experience that to think of one thing one must stop thinking of something else. So the realists among the Buddhists must describe this situation by the stopping of one thought for the arising of another thought. Thus again, it is not that the new thought arises from (ablative) non-thought. It is just that even for me to write this paper I had to give up, albeit temporarily, other mental pursuits, and to concentrate on this task. But we must grant Śaṅkara's point that there must be a continuum, which among other words he calls the *jīva*. The Buddhists indicated something similar by their word *santāna* (or, *santati*), the 'stream' of consciousness.

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When it comes to the theories of 'voidness' (*śūnyatā*) among the Buddhists, one can consult the numerous *Sādhanas* of the two-volume work, *Sādhanamālā* to see a common procedure.[10] The operator first contemplates the void, and therein, for example, may imagine a moon disk, and thereon a seed-syllable, such as HRĪḤ. He then imagines this *bījākṣara* (seed syllable) changing into something else, especially the body of a deity. It is clear from these numerous texts of evocation that it was never the position that 'voidness' itself is the cause of the generation: it is only the 'seed syllable' imagined therein that is credited with this generation in the imaginative sequence.

Therefore, when one reads the texts of Buddhism — instead of accepting what is alleged in commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra* — one can find out the truth of these systems of thought. It is a fact as well that to find out Śaṅkara's system we should consult his own writings. It does little good to consult his later adversaries among the Vedāntic authors to learn the truth of what Śaṅkara teaches.

NOTES

1. *Word Index to the Brahma-sutra-bhāṣya of Saṅkara*, Part One (1971), Part Two (1973) (University of Madras).

2. Four birthplaces are usually stated as from wombs, eggs, 'sweat' (*saṁsveda*), or by transformation (*upapāduka*), according to Buddhist Abhidharma. Śaṅkara on III, 1, 20, cites the *Ch. Up.* VI, 3, 1, that there are three 'origins' (*bīja*): birth from eggs, from a living being (*jīva*) or from a sprout (*ubbhid*): and then he makes four, as I understand him, by making the 'sprout' stand for two, whether springing from earth or water. Here the *jīva* kind apparently amounts to the 'womb' birth of other lists.

3. *Cf.* Esther A. Solomo, *Avidyā — a Problem of Truth and Reality* (Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 1969), pp. 233-4.

4. Solomon, *Avidyā*, p. 231, points out: "Questions like 'whose is avidyā' 'where does it appear?' are useless for if avidyā is not known they cannot be solved, and if avidyā be perceived one would also perceive him who has it." And yet it is somewhere and in too many places.

5. Using *The Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* (Nirṇaya Sagar Press, Bombay, 1948), p. 246: yeṣv api bījādiṣu svarūpopamardo lakṣyate teṣv api nā'sāv upamṛdyamānā pūrvāvasthottarāvasthāyāḥ kāraṇam abhyupagamyate, anupamṛdyamānānām evānuyāyināṃ bījādyavayavānām aṅkurādikāraṇabhāvābhyupagamāt.

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6. Bombay ed., p. 353: sa evāyam upādhiḥ svāpaprabodhayor bījāṅkuranyāyenety ataḥ sa eva jīvaḥ pratibudhyata iti yuktam.

7. *Cf.* Gregory J.Darling, *An Evaluation of the Vedāntic Critique of Buddhism* (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1987), section of *Brahmasūtra* II, 2, 28: "nābhāva upalabdheḥ", pp. 303-327, with the comments of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva on this sūtra.

8. *Cf.* A. Wayman, "Vasubandhu — Teacher Extraordinary," *Studia Missionalia*, Vol. 37, 1988, pp. 258-9.

9. Darling, *An Evaluation*, pp. 279-291.

10. Benoytosh Bhattacharya, ed., *Sādhanamālā*, 2 vols. (Baroda, 1068).

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12

THE EMPIRICAL SUBJECT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NYĀYA AND ADVAITA VEDĀNTA THEORIES

SIBAJIBAN BHATTACHARYYA

I. *Introduction*

By 'Advaita Vedānta theories' I shall mean here not merely the theories of Śaṅkara and his followers but also the theories of Gauḍapāda. The empirical subject is that which cognises objects, feels pleasure and pain, desires to obtain or avoid objects, acts morally or immorally. It is the unity of thinking, feeling and willing. I shall first explain some features of the Nyāya theory.

II. *The Nyāya Theory*

1. According to Nyāya, the empirical subject is a substance, a finite self (*jīvātmā*) to which cognition, feeling and willing belong as qualities. There are infinitely many selves which are all eternal substances, and all of them are different from the supreme self, *i.e.*, God.

2 Because the finite empirical subject is an eternal substance, it remains identical with itself in dream, dreamless sleep and even in liberation.

3. According to Nyāya the finite self has fourteen qualities five of which it shares with inamimate objects. So self and matter are not contradictory to each other.

4. Although the remaining nine qualities belong only to a finite self-substance, still they are not known in the same way. According to Nyāya, consciousness or awareness is identified with cognition, the other eight special qualities of the self are unconscious qualities. Thus pleasure and pain, desires and aversion, mental effort etc , are all unconscious qualities although belonging to the self. One can be aware of them only by knowing them in a subsequent state of the self which is, of course, inner preception (*mānasa pratyakṣa*). Even though cognition is identified with consciousness or awareness, it is awareness of objects but not of

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itself. A cognition as a state of the self has to be itself cognised in a second-order cognition (*anuvyavasāya*). The second-order cognition, again, can be known or cognised only by a third-order cognition and so on.

5. Consciousness, according to Nyāya, is momentary (*kṣaṇika*). But momentariness of cognition in Nyāya is different from the momentariness of Buddhists. According to Nyāya, a cognition as a quality of the self has three moments — one moment of origination (*utpattikṣaṇa*), a moment of duration, and the next moment of cessation. According to the Buddhists, on the other hand, an object is momentary if and only if it has two moments — a moment of origination and the next moment of cessation. Thus according to the Buddhists, a momentary object cannot have any moment of duration, cannot endure even for a moment.

6. The reasons for the Nyāya conception of momentary cognition enduring for one moment are the following. We have seen that according to Nyāya cognition is awareness of objects. To be aware of the cognition another cognition having the first cognition as its object has to follow. Now this higher order cognition is inner perception and so the object cognition has to be present when the higher order cognition originates. As according to Nyāya two cognitions cannot originate at the same moment, the object cognition has to *endure* when the *anuvyavasāya originates*. So every cognition has to endure at least for one moment.

7. According to Nyāya the empirical subject, *i.e.*, the finite self is a substance of which consciousness or awareness, feeling and willing are all adventitious qualities. In deep dreamless sleep there is no consciousness in the self, the vital functions of the body being carried out by the force of *adṛṣṭa*.

8. According to Nyāya the inner sense (*antaḥkaraṇa*) consists of *manas* alone which is atomic in size. The I-sense is identical with the awareness of the self and is identical with this awareness. Every finite self is different from every other finite selves all of which have their I-sense built into them.

9. The *manas* being atomic there cannot be any images of objects, any modes or transformations of the *manas*.

10. According to Nyāya all consciousness is directly internally perceived by a higher order consciousness or cognition. So the Nyāya theory of consciousness may be regarded as a surface theory of consciousness, having no inner unexplored depths.

11. The finite self is not omniscient or omnipotent, but is

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omnipresent in the sense that all objects of limited size are in contact with it. A finite self is omnipresent in the same sense as the infinite self, *i.e.*, God. No *vibhu* can be located anywhere, hence God cannot be immanent, an indwelling reality.

12. The infinite self or God is again a self-substance having eternal, immediate knowledge of all objects, past, present and future. God is omnipotent in the sense that he creates everything that is created, not in the sense of having the power to create everything. According to Nyāya, the atoms, space, time etc., are all as eternal as God himself.

13. Liberation does not mean transcending the world of appearance or ignorance, the self being *vibhu*, being omnipresent, cannot move from place to place, cannot transcend the world. To be liberated is to be free from sorrows for all time to come. But to attain this state the self has not to transcend the world, but being incapable of movement remains where it always is, *i.e.*, everywhere. To be liberated, therefore, the self has to stay in itself and not be related to the *manas*, to the body, to karma or to any of the qualities which are destroyed for good if they are non-eternal; otherwise although they exist, the self is not related to them. Thus liberation in the sense of destruction of all present sorrows and avoidance of all future sorrows, is achieved by the destruction of the *relation* of the self to not-self, not by the wholesale destruction of the not-self.

III. *The Advaita Vedānta Theory*

(a) According to Advaita Vedānta philosophers the empirical subject is pure infinite consciousness illusorily cognised as finite. There are three different theories about how this unreal appearance is caused — (i) *avacchedavāda*, (ii) *ābhāsavāda* and (iii) *pratibimbavāda*.

(i) According to the first theory, the empirical subject. i.e., the *jīva*. is pure consciousness illusorily restricted by *antaḥkaraṇa*, which is constituted by *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṅkāra* (the I- sense or the ego). When there is an awareness of doubt or vacillation it is the function of *manas* as an element of the *antaḥkaraṇa* (the inner sense). When there is awareness of certainty it is the function of the element of buddhi in the inner sense. The I-sense which is present in every cognition in the form 'I cognise' is due to the element of *ahaṅkāra* (ego) of the inner sense. Recollection or memory is due to the element of *citta* in the inner sense. As a matter of fact the inner sense is a unity which does not contain

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these four factors but which only functions in four different ways in an epistemological context. Because of this functional difference the one *antaḥkaraṇa* is called by four names.

Now according to the *avacchedavāda*, this *antaḥkaraṇa* is different in different individuals and so the individuals also are different. This theory is usually explained by a metaphor. Space is one and infinite; yet it is restricted by things like rooms etc. In room space inside is restricted by its walls, yet this space so restricted is not really a part cut off from the infinite space, but is identical with the infinite space which is not affected by being bounded by the four walls of the room. Yet one may say that rooms of different sizes enclose different portions of the infinite space; so also the different empirical subjects are really partial manifestations of the infinite consciousness.

If we accept this theory, then we can easily distinguish between finite selves and the infinite pure consciousness and so can explain how a finite self can meditate on the infinite consciousness. For meditation or contemplation requires a difference between that which contemplates and that which is contemplated upon. The contemplator and the contemplated cannot be identical as that would identify the subject of the act with the object which would make the action impossible (*kartṛ karma bhāva*).

(ii) According to the second theory, finite selves are so many reflections of the one infinite pure consciousness in the different *antaḥkaraṇas*. This theory also is explained with the help of a metaphor of the sun reflected in different pots of water. The reflected pure consciousness is the empirical subject (*ābhāsa eva ca*, *Brahmasūtra* 2.3.50).

Now the question arises whether the reflection and the reflected are one or different. According to Sureśvara, the *bimba* (the original object) and the *pratibimba* (the reflection) are different. The *pratibimba* is the shadow (*chāyā*) or *ābhāsa* of the *bimba*. But the shadow is not real, is *mithyā*. Hence the finite selves being *pratibimbas*, *i.e.*, shadows, cannot be real.

(iii) According to the third theory, the *bimba* and the *pratibimba* are not really different, their difference is the product of *ajñāna* and is, therefore, itself *mithyā*. The face reflected in a mirror and the face itself are not really two objects. According to Vidāyraṇya if the *bimba* and the *pratibimba* are really different then there cannot be any relation of reflection between them. One object cannot be a reflection of an altogether different object.

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According to the *ābhāsavāda* explained above [in (ii)] it is only the reflection which is illusory. But this theory cannot be accepted because if it were illusory then it would have been cancelled by a true cognition of the form 'this is not the face'; but this cognition never arises. Hence it cannot be said that the reflection of the face in the mirror is illusory. It is, of course, true that one realises that there is no face in the mirror, but this realisation cancels not the face itself, but only the relation of the face with the reflection in the mirror. As a matter of fact, what one recognises is that this face reflected in the mirror *is* my face, which shows that the *bimba* and the *pratibimba*, the object and its reflection, are not different, that they are really one.

There are some Advaita Vedānta philosophers who try to conceive the reflection as a copy or imprint of the object. But this interpretation of the relation between the reflection and the object reflected cannot be accepted. For the imprint, say, of a seal on a wax is of the same size and shape as the object itself, yet the face reflected in a small mirror is smaller in size than the face itself. So the reflection cannot be regarded as an imprint of an object as on wax.

According to others the face reflected in the mirror is not the face which is on the body of the person. The reflection is a different face. But this theory, too, cannot be accepted. If the face in the mirror is a different face, the question, then inevitably arises: Where from does it come? What produces it? There cannot be any satisfactory reply to such questions. Moreover, everyone recognises that his face which is on his body is reflected in the mirror, which shows that they are identical.

Against this theory it may be objected that if the face on the body and the face reflected in the mirror are one and the same then how is that the reflection is seen in the mirror? The reply to this objection is that the face seen as reflected in the mirror is the function of *ajñāna*. This *ajñāna* wrongly reveals one object as another, one object located here as the object located there and so on. When the face on the body is mistakenly cognised being in the mirror, this wrong cognition is the reflection.

According to some philosophers, there is no such thing as reflection. It is an illusion that we seem to see the reflection of our face in the mirror. When we look at the mirror the light rays are reflected back on our face and therefore the eyes see the face itself. Unless the light rays are reflected back on to our face we

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cannot see our face. This reflection of the light rays requires the presence of a mirror and that is why we cannot see our face except in the presence of a mirror. Hence it is an illusion to see the reflection of the face in the mirror.

Against this theory it is pointed out that what we see in the mirror cannot be the real face because in the mirror the image is inverted. If what we see in the mirror is the real face then this inversion of the image becomes inexplicable. Hence it has to be admitted that the face and its reflection have different locations, and this difference in location can easily explain the inversion of the image.

We can easily explain how pure infinite consciousness can be the indwelling spirit of the *jīva*. This cannot be explained on *avacchedavāda*.

In any case the Advaita Vedānta theory of the emprical subject is fundamentally different from the Nyāya theory. For, according to Nyāya philosophers consciousness is a quality of the self, whereas according to Advaita Vedānta philosophers consciousness *is* the self. Moreover, according to Nyāya the finite selves are infinite in number and are all eternal substances, whereas according to the Advaita Vedānta the finite selves are unreal.

(b) While according to Nyāya philosophers, the self and matter are not contradictory to each other, according to Advaita Vedānta they are as opposed as light and darkness. Philosophy begins with the realisation of the mystery that an impossible unity of two contradictory realities is yet an actual fact, namely, the unity of body and soul in the person of every individual. The whole of Advaita philosophy is an attempt to explain rationally how the impossible can yet be actual.

(c) According to Advaita Vedānta, there cannot be unconscious inner states. According to Nyāya, even a cognition of an object has to be cognised by another higher order cognition (*anuvyavasāya*) and so on ad infinitum. Advaita Vedānta philosophers avoid this infinite regress by postulating that inner states are directly revealed to the witnessing consciousness. There is no need for introspection in the Nyāya sense.

(d) According to Advaita Vedānta consciousness is unchanging, and remains ever identical with itself. Contents *of* consciousness are not contents *in* consciousness. The rapid succession of ideas, impressions and other mental states are states of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, a plastic material substance which assumes forms of objects.

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This *antaḥkaraṇa* of the inner sense is not consciousness, but belongs to the world of objects revealed by consciousness.

(e) The self is not conscious, as in Nyāya, but *is* consciousness. Even in deep dreamless sleep the witnessing consciousness remains ever awake and directly reveals the state of sleep. If sleep were not directly experienced, there can be no proof of its existence. Its existence cannot be validly inferred from bodily well-being of the person when he wakes up from sleep.

(f) The self which is pure consciousness is devoid of the ego according to Advaita Vedānta. The ego is one function of the material *antaḥkaraṇa*, and hence the difference among persons cannot belong to consciousness. Consciousness cannot be mine or yours; 'my consciousness' literally is meaningless, for consciousness is the ultimate owner; it cannot be owned by anything else.

(g) The *antaḥkaraṇa* assumes forms of objects, which are its modifications. The modes of *antaḥkaraṇa* are like mental images of objects. This also explains how two cognitions can arise simultaneously in the *antaḥkaraṇa* which is as it were a spread-out plastic matter. All awareness of outer objects (*pramā*) is due to the *vṛttis* of the *antaḥkaraṇa*.

(h) But the awareness of the *vṛttis* themselves cannot require further *vṛttis*; for this will lead to infinite regress. So the *vṛttis* themselves have to known directly without *vṛttis*. This direct awareness is the awareness which is the witness. Thus there are different senses of consciousness according to Advaita Vedānta. At the surface level, there is *vṛtti-jñāna*, *i.e.*, awareness of outer objects through images etc., then behind this awareness there is the witnessing consciousness which directly reveals the surface awareness.

(i) As has been already explained, the finite selves (*jīvas*) are not real, but mere appearances. Really there is only one consciousness which is universal and is the foundation of the empirical world including the finite selves. There is no question of finite selves being *vibhu*. According to Nyāya all *vibhu padārthas* as well as atoms are eternally real and there is an infinite number of them. This is an extreme form of pluralism. According to Advaita Vedānta, however, the concept of many realities is self-contradictory. There cannot be different realities, because the very concept of manyness involves self-contradiction. If, for example, we want to say that there are two things, then the two things have to be both different and non-different at the same

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time. If there is one table here and another table there, we may say that there are two tables. But if there is one chair and one table, we cannot say either that there are two tables or two chairs. We shall have to find out a feature in which the two things are not different. We may, therefore, say that there are two pieces of furniture. But if there is a table and litre of milk we cannot say that there are two tables or two litres of milk. We shall have to rise higher or go deeper to find out in what respect they are non-different. We may say that there are two measurable objects, for the table can be counted and the milk measured. As counting itself is one kind of measure in the technical mathematical sense both the chair and the glass of milk are measurable objects. This shows that to be able to say that there are *two* realities, we must show in what respect they are different and in what respect they are non-different. This shows again that every object has many aspects and the problem of relating them again into the unity of the object will arise, and so on ad infinitum. Thus the concept of duality is logically inconsistent. Hence Advaita Vedānta is non-dualistic.

(j) According to Nyāya, liberation is due to cancellation of ignorance about the nature of the self and other specific objects. When this ignorance gets removed, it does not follow that the whole world is realised as a false appearance. The world which has been known correctly and truly through perception, inference and other *pramāṇas*, remains unaffected by the removel of ignorance about specific objects. The self, by attaining liberation, transcends the world only in the sense that it escapes the beginningless cycle of birth and deaths. It does not transcend the world in the sense of going beyond the world; it remains very much as an item of the real world.

In achieving this sort of liberation, the finite self being devoid of all its connections with its body and manas becomes totally unconscious. A moot point which arises here is whether liberation, in the sense of becoming unconscious for all time to come can be ever a *puruṣārtha*, something of prime value for the individual.

Advaita Vedānta avoids this absurdity by postulating that the self is essentially consciousness which it cannot lose even in liberation. The self by attaining liberation transcends the world by realising that the world is a false appearance. This is attaining the highest or the deepest level of consciousness as when one realises the utter unreality of his dreams when he wakes up. As

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there is a passage from dream to waking consciousness, so also there is a passage from empirical consciousness to transcendental consciousness. But when one attains this state one realises that one was never bound and limited, never suffered any pain, and so on. Thus it is not merely that the whole world is cancelled and realised as unreal, but it is also cancelled with retrospective effect. This may be explained by our experience of disillusionment. When, for example, we mistake a piece of rope for a snake, and then immediately afterwards realise our mistake, we know not merely that there is no snake now, but that there was no snake even when I perceived it. Thus cancellation of illusion of this type is always with retrospective effect.

IV. *Analysis of Dream*

The Nyāya analysis of dream is radically different from the Advaita Vedānta analysis for various reasons. We first explain the Nyāya theory as propounded by Gautama and his followers.

A. *The Nyāya Theory*

The Nyāya theory of dream has the following main points:

1. Dreaming is not recollecting or remembering; it is a direct experience, is perceptual in nature.
2. Dream, however, presupposes memory, and has many similarities with it.
3. Dream experience is radically different from waking experience, and presupposes it. It cannot be said meaningfully that all our life is a dream. Dream is one kind of illusory perception.
4. As dream is illusory experience, it shares all features of illusory experience.

Now we explain these points in some detail

1. Dream experience is direct experience, not memory. This is proved by the immediate awareness of the dream experience on waking. In Sanskrit, as in many vernacular languages in India, the idiom is 'I *saw* an elephant in a dream' and not that 'I remembered an elephant in a dream.'[1] Whether this linguistic idiom is correct or not, our immediate awareness of dream experience is of a direct experience.

2. Yet dreaming is not possible without past experience leaving its trace, or the trace remains inactive. Just as recollection is not possible without traces of past experiences being activated, so also dream is impossible without them. In this respect dreams are similar to memory.

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It may be argued that often we dream about things which we have never seen or directly experienced. Sometimes we dream about wholly novel objects, sometimes we dream about objects or events which it is impossible for us to have experienced. For example, one may dream that one is beheaded, an event which it is impossible to have experienced before. So it is not correct to say that in all *cases dreams are caused* by memory traces of past experiences.

To answer this objection it is necessary to examine what causes dreams. There are various types of causes for various types of dreams. (a) There are some dreams which are caused by the intensity of traces of thoughts, desires etc. When an angry man goes to sleep thinking continuously and deeply about his enemy, then all these thoughts and the chain of memory impression produce perceptual awareness in dream. (b) Physiological disorders may cause some types of dreams. For example, one may dream of flying if one is suffering from excess of gases, or may dream of falling into water if one feels cold when a sleep, and so on. This type of dream usually does not depend on impressions or memory traces. (c) One may dream of pleasantly riding horses if one is happy, *i.e.*, the dream is due to accumulated merits (*dharma*), or one may have unpleasant dreams of evil omen because of demerits. This type of dreams is not due to either memory impressions, or physiological disorders, but due to merits and demerits. One may dream of things already experienced, or of wholly novel things in this case. One may dream about objects totally unknown to him owing to merits or demerits. For example Damayantī dreamt about King Nala even though she had never seen him before.

Now the cases (c) which are allegedly not caused by memory impressions are shown by Gautama to be reducible to case (a). On this point there is a fundamental difference between Praśastapāda who distinguishes among the three cases, and Gautama who accepts only the first type of dreams. Thus the case of Damayantī may be explained by pointing out that although she had not seen King Nala, still she had heard about him, and known many details about him. It is the memory impressions of this knowledge which are the real causes of the dreams. Even in case (b), the details of the dreams vary from person to person having the same type of disorders. This shows that the physiological disorders really activate memory impressions which, then, cause

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the dreams. Thus, according to Gautama, recollection and dream are similar in this that both are caused by traces of previous knowledge.

3. Dream is illusory perception: so analysis of dream is dependent upon an analysis of illusory perception. One problem is to show whether all our life is a dream. Now it may be pointed out that waking consciousness is different in kind from dream experience. So it cannot be reduced to dream. The other argument is to show that all dream is illusory, so also all waking experience is illusory. Waking experience is *often* mistaken; one may generalise and say that it is *always* mistaken. As Descartes has argued, it is not '*prudent*' to trust that which has deceived us even once. And it is established that many things seen even in waking experience are non-existent; for example, sometimes one sees a whole city in the sky, or is deceived by mirage and so on.

The reply to this type of argument is that mere examples of illusory perception in waking experience cannot prove that whatever is known in waking experience is non-existent. For that a cogent reason has to be adduced. In the absence of any such reason, the thesis that waking experience is always deceptive cannot be established. Now what reason is there for holding that all dreamt objects are non-existent? One reason is that one cannot find them on waking. This absence of knowledge of object which in the dream were present shows that they are unreal. Now if it be asserted that even if objects found to exist in waking experience are, nonetheless, non-existent, then absence of knowledge cannot be a cogent reason for their non-existence. If objects of dream not found on waking are non-existent, and if objects known in waking experience, too, are non-existent, then not-finding cannot be a cogent reason (or even relevant) for proving non-existence of objects of dream. For, whether the objects are found or not-found in waking experience, they would be, in any case, non-existent. To make non-finding of objects of dream on waking a cogent reason for their non-existence, it has to be admitted that if objects are found in waking experience, then they are real. Objects which are *only* not found in waking experience are non-existent.

Moreover if all things are unreal, then there cannot be any cause of the rich variety of dreams — some dreams are pleasant, some are terrifying nightmares, and so on. Moreover, dreams have a beginning, they also end, even before a person wakes up or when

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a different dream begins. There cannot be such difference in the beginning, the end, and duration of dreams without causes. But if everything is unreal, then there can be no causes of dreams, their variety, their beginning or end. So everything cannot be proved to be unreal on the ground of dream objects being unreal.

Now are the objects of dream utterly unreal? Can we say that they did not exist in the past, do not exist now, and will never exist? If the objects of dream are non-existent at all times, still it would be wrong to say that they are unactualisable, *i.e.*, *cannot* be actualised and hence impossible. To say that something *does* never exist is not to say that it *can* never exist. Even in Western traditional logic many logicians made a distinction between inseparable accident and property. The mere fact that some attribute *is* present always does not prove that it *has* to be so present. So the Indian concept of *alīka* is not the concept of an impossible object, but of an object which happens to be always non-existent. That objects of dream are not utterly unreal follows from the fact that the objects have to be first known in the waking state in order to have their impressions on the self, which produce dreams. Unless the objects were real, they could not have been known, and if they were not known, their impressions could not be present in the self, and no dreams could occur. Moreover, the dreamer must be the identical person who knows the objects in the waking state. Thus the self must be real and be an enduring subject.

It may be argued: if the objects of dream be real objects, then how can dream be illusory? That objects of dream are unreal is admitted by all. In reply, it may be pointed out that it is enough to hold that the dreamt objects do not exist where and when they are dreamt to be present in order to explain how dream is illusory. It is not necessary to suppose that they do not exist anywhere or at any time.

Now it may be argued that it is not necessary to postulate that one has to *know* objects in waking experience in order to explain how he can dream about them, it is enough to hold that he has impressions (ideas) of the objects, which he can get even from illusory experience. Illusory experience of objects causes impressions on the self as much veridical perception. This argument is not tenable, for if all waking experience is illusory and so also is all dream experience, then there cannot be any distinction between waking and dreaming. But then the argument to prove

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waking experience to be illusory on the analogy of dream experience becomes unfounded; for, now, there is only one type of experience which is dream experience. Then there can be no question of waking experience at all.

Nyāya philosophers further strengthen their case by an analysis of illusory perception. In illusory perception something real is mistaken for something else. Thus when a shell is mistaken for a piece of silver, one knows 'this is a piece of silver'. Now although the silver is non-existent there, the 'this' is real. That is, in every illusory perceptual experience the subject is real, although the predicate is not. So every illusory perception involves a veridical perception of the subject. Hence the subject has to be real. According to Nyāya, the so-called hallucinations which do not have any real subject are really cases of illusion.

Now it may be objected that if dreams are caused by true impressions, then how can one dream that one is beheaded? From the nature of the case, one could not have any veridical perception of this event. The method followed by Nyāya philosophers here to reply to this objection is the general method of conceptual analysis of the dream content. One must have a veridical experience of one's own head, and must have a veridical experience of what it is to be cut; in the dream one combines these two ideas of one's own head and something being cut, to form the complex content of one's own head being cut off. Thus all the simpler elements of the dream are real objects.

Moreover, Nyāya philosophers argue what waking experience cancels is only the dream experience, but not objects of dream experience. True cognition contradicts false cognition, but not objects of false cognition. For if the objects be contradicted, they would be unreal, but as has been shown above, every illusion presupposes true cognition of the subject. If the object of illusion were utterly unreal, then everyone ought to have illusion about that object. But a person from a distance may perceive water in a desert when there is no water, and have an illusory perception of water there, but a person standing near will not have that illusion. If everything is illusory in this world, if all experience is dream experience, then it remains an inexplicable mystery why some persons have a particular illusion, while others do not have it. So also those who see a whole town in the sky must view the sky from a particular point of view, others who are placed differently do not have that illusion. These facts prove that illusions

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have special causes which produce them. Only a real thing can have causal efficacy; an utterly unreal thing like a sky-lotus can have no causal efficacy.

Thus, according to Nyāya, dreaming proves the reality of the dream, of the dreaming which is the object of internal perception and also of all the elements of the dreamt object. The subject who dreams is the subject of waking experience.

B. *Gauḍapāda's theory*

That dream objects are unreal is admitted by everyone even though the dream may be very vivid. Gauḍapāda gives the following reasons for regarding dream objects as unreal.

Dream objects are unreal because they are seen within the body in a very limited space. Mountains, chariots etc., seen in a dream cannot possibly be accommodated in the small limited space occupied by the body of the dreamer. So they must be unreal or imaginary.

It may be objected here that the mountains etc., are not within the body; the dreamer may be actually travelling to those regions, in which case things seen in a dream may be regarded as real. The reply to this objection is that it is impossible for the dreamer to actually travel to the regions within the short period of time he is dreaming; the dream hardly lasts, say ten minutes or so; how could he be travelling thousands of miles during that period? Secondly, many a time the dreamer awakes suddenly, but he does not find himself, when awake, in the regions which he had visited in his dream. All these show that the objects seen in a dream are within the body itself; the dreamer does not go out to see them.

Professor Kalidas Bhattacharyya has interpreted Gauḍapāda as holding that not merely the dream objects but also the dream experience, and indeed, the dreamer, himself are *mithyā* just as, according to Advaita Vedānta, in the case of illusory perception, not merely the snake is unreal but also the perception of the snake is unreal. When the illusion is corrected, we realise not merely that there was no snake at all to be seen, but also there was no seeing of a snake at all. As there was not snake, there could not have been any perception of snake also. The same is true about dream objects and dream experience. Both are equally unreal—the objects as well as the dream.

Not merely the dream objects and the dreaming are unreal, but also the dreamer, too. Professor Bhattacharyya gives the

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following three reasons for holding the dreamer to be unreal. (i) The dreamer is not accepted as identical with the subject of waking experience. The person who dreamt these absurd things is felt as alien and foreign to me when I wake up. I have an immediate awareness that the person who dreamt these objects could not have been myself. (ii) We dream not merely about objects, but also about persons who are equally unreal. Now if the persons that I dream about are unreal, and as I myself as the dreamer am one among them, then the dreamer should be equally unreal as they. (iii) There cannot be any intelligible relation between me as a waking subject and me as a dreamer; for, the dream experiences of the dreamer and the waking experiences of myself cannot be related at all, are not integrated into my life-history, nor do I want them to be integrated into it. The realm of experiences and also the dreamer, stand out from me as an altogether different individual totally unrelated to me. The dreamer and his experiences hang completely unsupported by me. Hence the dream objects, dream experiences and the dreamer belong to a region which floats without any connection to my world, my experiences and myself.[2]

Gauḍapāda, however, goes further and reduces waking experience to dream. According to him, the world of waking experience is as unreal as dream objects from the ultimate point of view. This does not, however, mean that there is only one experience which can be called indifferently dream experience or waking experience. Although dream experiences and waking experiences are fundamentally of the same kind to persons who have attained knowledge of the ultimate reality, still, from the empirical standpoint, they are different. Gauḍapāda points out the following of similarity and dissimilarity between them.

(i) Dream experiences and waking experiences are equally experiences, *i.e.*, inner states of the individual. Yet dream differs from the waking state because dream objects are within the mind (the subtle body), whereas objects of waking experience are outside. But this difference between location of entities cannot mean a difference in their ontological status. For both these types of objects come into being and pass out of existence. "What is not at the beginning and at the end, cannot be also in the present." As dream objects and empirical objects are not eternal, they are equally unreal.

(ii) If dream objects are contradicted by waking experience,

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so also waking experiences are contradicted by dream experience. The hearty meal that a person takes in the dream is of no avail in the waking state where he has to satisfy his hunger by having another meal. Now exactly the same is the situation about objects in the waking state. The dreamer goes on eating in a dream as though he had never eaten in the waking state. So objects of waking experience stand on the same level as the objects of dream in that each is contradicted in the other state.

It may be objected here that objects of waking consciousness can contradict or be contradicted by dream objects if we had the same objects always in dream and waking experience. But many a time the dreamer sees in a dream quite abnormal, fantastic and novel objects which he has never seen in his waking state. Are we not therefore justified in saying that the dream is an entirely unique state having no correspondance to the waking state?

The reply to this objection is as follows. It is true that the dream objects are novel. But this novelty is characteristic of the dream state. An ordinary person when anointed as king, comes to possess extra-ordinary powers. Similarly the dream is a privileged place. To us in the waking state the things seen or done in a dream may appear impossible or abnormal, but the dreamer considers them as just ordinary routine and they are real to the dreamer only. The reality or unreality of things does not depend upon whether the things are normal or abnormal, but upon whether they are capable of being belied in another state.

(iii) Even in dream we sometimes distinguish between the real and the unreal, between a person speaking the truth and a person telling a lie, just as we do in waking experience.

(iv) Dream objects are objects within, staying as long as the dream lasts. Objects without which are the objects of waking consciousness, are dependent upon or correlated to two factors — the internal and external. The outer objects can be perceived by the self only by means of external sense-organs. But in spite of this difference all objects, whether within or without, are imagined objects. It is true that objects within are not distinctly experienced while those without are distinct, but this distinction between the two is caused merely by the difference in the means of their cognition. This does not imply any ontological difference between them. Thus according to Gauḍapāda, the empirical world, the empirical subject and his experiences are as unreal as those in dreams. As a matter of fact spiritually gifted persons do

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have immediate awareness of the world as a dream world. Wittgenstein, for example, once wrote, "Our life is like a dream. But in our better hours we wake up just enough to realize that we are dreaming. Most *of the time*, *though*, we are fast asleep.' (LLW, 5,7)."[3]

NOTES

1. This idiom is foreign to English. In English one says 'I dreamt that there was an elephant.' But I am told that in Greek, at least in classical Greek, one says 'I *see* a dream', whereas in English one says, 'I dream' or at most, 'I dream a dream.'
2. *Māṇḍūkyōpaniṣader kathā* (in Bengali), Calcutta University.
3. Anthony Kenny, *Wittgenstein*, Harvard, 1973.

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13

ŚAṄKARA AND THE VAIŚEṢIKA-NAIYĀYIKA SCHOOLS

S. SANKARANARAYANAN

"*namaḥ śaṅkarāya ca mayaskarāya ca.*" "Homage to Śaṅkara and to the bestower of the Deliverance-Joy."[1]

The present paper aims to study how Śrī Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkarācārya deals with the schools of the Vaiśeṣikas and the Naiyāyikas in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya.*

I

The students of Vedānta know that the *tarkapāda* of the *Brahmasūtra* (II, ii) is entirely devoted to review, purely by logic and practically with no reference to scripture, the different theories of world creation expounded by the Sāṅkhyas, the Vaiśeṣikas and the Bauddhas and also the views of the Jainas, the Māheśvaras and the Bhāgavatas on the nature of the *jīva* (the embodied soul) and Īśvara (the supreme God). Thus on the whole the views of the six opponents are examined and refuted in the *pāda.* Out of the eight *adhikaraṇas* (sections) of the *pāda*, two (§ 2-3) are alloted to the Vaiśeṣika and two (§ 4-5) to the Bauddha, while others get one each.

The Ācārya's criticism of the Vaiśeṣika mainly centres around the latter's doctrine of atomism (*paramāṇu-jagatkāraṇavāda*) and it runs as follows.

(1) At the time of creation of the world, there could have been no definite cause to energise the atoms so that they might have conjunction (*saṁyoga*) with one another in order to create the world through the process of producing binary (*dvyaṇuka*), quaternary (*caturaṇuka*), etc.; so also, at the time of destruction, they could not have separation (*vibhāga*) from one another to destroy the world through the process of destroying the gross elements (*mahābhūtas*) etc. Hence the creation and destruction of the world are impossible under the atomic theory. (2) In fact, being infinitesimally spherical (*parimaṇḍala*) and having no parts (*ava-*

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yava), the atoms, as conceived by the Vaiśeṣika cannot at all have conjunction with one another to create the world. For, the nature of conjunction is such that it can be only between the two that have parts and space (*sāvayava* and *pradeśavat*). (3) The Vaiśeṣika view of inherence (*samavāya*) as an eternal relation between the atoms and their products, *viz.* binary, etc., makes again the creation and destruction of the world an impossibility. (4) It is illogical to maintain that the atoms are eternal. For, having colour, touch, etc., they must be as temporary as a pot or a cloth. (5) Above all, the atomic theory of the Vaiśeṣika is to be straightway rejected, as this has never been accepted, even to a very limited extent, by the illustrious Vedists like Manu.

The Ācārya's attack on the Vaiśeṣika reaches its climax when he brands the latter as a semi-Nihilist resembling the total-Nihilist (*i.e.*, the Bauddhas) (*saḥ ardhavaināśika iti vaināśikatvasāmyāt — Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* (*BSB*), introduction to II, ii, 18). All these above criticisms, the Ācārya makes against the Vaiśeṣika, are by way of his explanations of the *Brahmasūtra* (*BS*) in the section *paramāṇujagatkāraṇatvādhikaraṇa* (*BS*, II, ii, 12-17). Beyond the scope of the *sūtra* (*utsūtram*), he adds: (6) The Vaiśeṣika hypothesis of inherence is highly illogical and his scheme of six categories is totally arbitrary. (7) In the previous section, *viz.*, the *mahaddīrghādhikaraṇa* (*BS*, II, ii, 11), Śaṅkara quotes the Vaiśeṣika objection to the Advaitin's *brahmajagatkāraṇatāvāda* as: If the supreme Brahman, that is sentient (*cetana*), were to be the material cause of the world then, sentiency (*cetanatā*) ought to inhere in the effect, *viz.*, the world, just as the white or red colour of the thread, the material cause, inheres in the cloth, the effect, and it cannot be otherwise. But the world as accepted by one and all, is insentient, hence its material cause cannot be the sentient Brahman. This the Ācārya retaliates by a sort of counter-attack. The Vaiśeṣika himself maintains that the qualities like shortness (*hrasvatva*) and infinitesimal sphericity (*pārimāṇḍalya*) of the material cause, atom and binary, do not cause similar quality in the effect, *viz.*, quaternary and so on that are actually gross and long. On the same analogy the Vedāntin could also maintain that the sentiency of Brahman, the material cause, does not inhere in the effect, the world.

Now it may be noted that philosophers like the Bauddhas have earlier attacked the Vaiśeṣika atomism on the lines of the point (2) above, and that Uddyotakara, in his *Nyāyavārttika*, has met their criticism to some extent under the *Nyāyasūtra* (*NS*)

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IV, ii, 17-25. To detail Uddyotakara's defence may not be necessary here. Suffice it to say that Śaṅkara's way of criticism seems to suggest that he is not perhaps fully aware of Uddyotakara's logic in question. Of course, one cannot say that the latter's logic would satisfy one and all. Again, in making the refutation no. 6, and in pointing out that the Vaiśeṣika postulation of *samavāya* would lead to a *regressus ad infinitum* (*anavasthā*), the Ācārya seems to be not fully familiar with the Nyāyavārttikakāra's treatment of the question, under *NS*, I, i, 5.

Similarly under refutation no. 1, Śaṅkara repeats the Vaiśeṣika theory of world-creation through the process of producing the binary, and then quaternary, etc. This theory, as the commentators show, is not the one propounded by the school of Praśastapāda. Moreover, the same Vaiśeṣika teacher introduces the *cikīrṣā* "the desire to create" and the *sañjihīrṣā* 'the desire to destroy' of the supreme God as the causes energizing the atoms respectively to get united or to fall apart. Śaṅkara is not taking this also into account in his refutation.

II

Earlier in the *śiṣṭāparigrahādhikaraṇa* of the *smṛtipāda* (*BS*, II, i, 12) also, Ācārya Śaṅkara makes the Vaiśeṣika system a target of his attack. Here he discredits the atomic theory as a doctrine being postulated by some dull-witted persons (*kaiścin mandamatibhiḥ*) and as the one being not accepted, even partly, by the *śiṣṭas* or persons of learning and discipline (*i.e.*, in the *Veda*), such as Manu, Vyāsa, etc. (*śiṣṭaiḥ manu-vyāsa-prabhṛtibhiḥ kenacid aṁśenāpi aparigṛhītaḥ*).

But we saw earlier, this atomic theory has been accepted by the author of the *Nyāyavārttika*, Uddyotakara whom Śaṅkara's most reputed commentator, Vācaspati Miśra himself rightly describes as a super-*śiṣṭa* (*paramaśiṣṭena vārttikakṛtā*).[2] It has been accepted also by Akṣapāda Gautama,[3] whom the Bhagavatpāda himself has praised as an *ācārya* (a teacher of repute) and also as a *nyāyavit* (an expert in logic) and whom he quotes twice (*BSB*, I, i, 4 and II, ii, 37) to his own advantage. Further, the Vaiśeṣika philosophy is traditionally very well known as one of the six Vaidikadarśanas. In view of all these I suggest the following: Is it totally impossible to exclude the refutation of the Vaiśeṣika from the scope of the *śiṣṭāparigrahādhikaraṇa* and include in it the common attack only on the known *avaidikas* like the Bauddhas, the Jainas and the Āgamikas? Can we include the *vaiśeṣikakhaṇḍana* (refutation of the Vaiśeṣika) as a *varṇakāntara* (another inter-

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pretation) under the earlier *yogapratyuktyadhikaraṇa* (*BS*, II, i, 3), the first *varṇaka*, as we have now, embodying the refutation of the Aṣṭāṅgayoga system? Could this approach save us the labour of explaining why the author of the *Brahmasūtras* should refute separately, after successfully knocking down the Sāṅkhya system because both have common theories of world-creation and of the soul? On account of this suggested *varṇakāntara*, are we not likely to have a more uniform order of attacking opponents both in the *smṛtipāda* and in the *tarkapāda* — *i.e.*, refutations of the Sāṅkhyas, the Vaiśeṣikas, the Bauddhas, the Jainas and the Āgamikas, one after the other? Have we not learnt from the *Gītābhāṣya* of Śaṅkara that the word *yoga* could connote non-Aṣṭāṅgayoga philosophy also?[4] In this context it would be good to bear in mind the following facts also.

(A) Under the *samānatantrasiddhāntasūtra* (*NS*, I, i, 29) the author of the *Nyāyabhāṣya*, Vātsyāyana cites the *asatkāryavāda*[5] as the exclusive doctrine of those whom he calls 'the yogas' and he balances this dotrine against the *satkāryavāda*,[6] the exclusive doctrine of the Sāṅkhyas. We are quite sure that the former doctrine is exclusively of the Vaiśeṣikas and that it is adopted *in toto* by the Naiyāyikas. We are also fully aware that the second doctrine of the Sāṅkhyas is being strictly adhered to by the philosophers of the Aṣṭāṅgayoga school. Again, in the same context, Uddyotakara mentions the *indriyabhautikatvavāda*[7] as the exclusive doctrine of those whom he names as 'the yogas'; and he puts this doctrine in apposition to the *indriyabhautikatvavāda*,[8] the exclusive doctrine of the Sāṅkhyas. In this case also we are certain that the former is the exclusive doctrine of the Vaiśeṣikas and of the Naiyāyikas also while the latter one is of the Sāṅkhya, and hence is of the Aṣṭāṅgayoga philosophers too.

(B) If one is a bit inclined to delve into the literature of still earlier period one could find some corroboration from Kauṭilya. In his *Arthaśāstra*, in the context of enumerating sciences (*vidyāsamuddeśa*), the ancient Indian political thinker brackets the Sāṅkhya, the Yoga, and the Lokāyata together as sciences in which *anvīkṣā*, i.e., *anumāna* 'inference' reigns supreme.

Sāṅkhyaṁ yogo lokāyataṁ ca ityānvīkṣikī[9]

We find Śaṅkara disparaging the Sāṅkhya for offering a place of honour to inference over and above the scripture. Bādarāyaṇa invariably refers to the *pradhāna* of the Sāṅkhya by the term *anumāna* indicating that he views it as a category which is inferred only

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and not mentioned in the scripture.[10] This indicates that Bādarāyaṇa too feels that the Sāṅkhya assigns to inference a pedestal that is higher than that of the scripture. We are also conscious of the fact that, as Śrī Śaṅkara shows, the Sāṅkhya establishes his *pradhāna* only by inference and he twists the texts of scripture to suit his inference.[11] So also, first by inference only the Vaiṣeṣikas (the Naiyāyikas too) establish the existence of God as the efficient cause (*nimittakāraṇa*) of the world and then go to the scripture for corroboration.[12] This sort of supremacy of inference we do not find in the Aṣṭāṅgayoga system. In the Lokāyata philosophy, as we otherwise know, scripture has no place at all as an authority and as stated by Kauṭilya, it must be depending on inference[13] only besides perception, just as the Vaiśeṣika school of Praśastapāda does. Therefore the '*Yoga*' mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* after the Sāṅkhya and before the Lokāyata certainly signifies the Vaiśeṣika and through this it could denote the Nyāya system, as it does in the *Nyāyabhāṣya* and the *Nyāyavārttika*, as we saw above. Otherwise Kauṭilya's *Vidyāsamuddeśa* would be much poorer as his list of *ānvīkṣikī* would be bereft of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system which is the *ānvīkṣikī* among *ānvīkṣikīs*.

On the basis of what we have seen so far, we may safely conclude that in the early Indian literature the word *yoga* signifies not infrequently the Vaiśeṣika system; that by this word, both Kauṭilya and Bādarāyaṇa mean the same system,[14] and through that, the Naiyāyika system too; and that Bādarāyaṇa probably thinks of refuting the Vaiśeṣika in the second *adhikaraṇa* of the *smṛtipāda* after refuting the Sāṅkhya in the first, just as he (Bādarāyaṇa) himself does in the next *pāda*. This suggestion suits very well the context in which the *sūtra*, "*etena yogaḥ pratyuktaḥ*" occurs. We have already seen that our suggestion would make the order of refutations of different systems in the *smṛtipāda* and *tarkapāda* uniform; and that this would save us the pain of explaining why after refuting the *Sāṅkhyasmṛti*, the *sūtrakāra* should undertake the pain of refuting the *Aṣṭāṅgayogasmṛti*, because both these sail on the same boat. Now we may add: After solving the problem of the *sāṅkhyasmṛtyanavakāśadoṣa* "the fault of leaving no scope to the *smṛti* of the Sāṅkhya system," in the *smṛtyadhikaraṇa i.e.* the first *adhikaraṇa* of the *pāda*, the *sūtrakāra* should naturally think of solving similar fault to the Vaiśeṣika *smṛti*. He has to do this because the Vaiśeṣika was rated in ancient India as an important *ānvīkṣikī* next to the Sāṅkhya, as Kauṭilya tells us. Sāṅkhya comes first

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because he is the *pradhānamalla* 'the chief wrestler'[15] as his *satkāryavāda* is favoured by the Vedists. After the Sāṅkhya, the Vaiśeṣika comes because by inference alone both the schools establish the existence of their respective ultimate material cause of the world — Sāṅkhya inferring the *pradhāna* and the Vaiśeṣika, the atom. Hence the Vaiśeṣika *smṛti* is dealt with in the *yogapratyuktyadhikaraṇa*.

Then arises the necessity for the *navilakṣaṇatvādhikaraṇa* to answer the combined logical objections of the Sāṅkhya and of the Vaiśeṣika — the former by *pariṇāmavāda*[16] and the latter by *ārambhavāda*[17] — to the Vedāntic *brahmajagatkāraṇatāvāda*.[18] The objection is: the sentient Brahman cannot be the *upādānakāraṇa*, 'material cause' of the insentient world; for the qualities of the material cause are bound to reproduce identical qualities in the effect. It is to be particularly noted that the *pūrvapakṣa* (the objection part of the argument) [of this *adhikaraṇa* and that of the first *vaiśeṣikādhikaraṇa*, *viz.*, the *mahaddīrghādhikaraṇa* of the next *pāda* are practically identical. This is felt by Śaṅkara himself when he, commenting on *BS*, II, ii, 3, points out that the objection answered by that *sūtra* has already been met with by the *siddhāntasūtra* of the *navilakṣaṇatvādhikaraṇa*, *viz. dṛśyate tu* (*BS*, II, i, 6). The Ācārya solves the problem of repetition by pointing out that the *BS* II, i, 6 answers the Sāṅkhya, while the *BS*, II, ii, 3 answers the Vaiśeṣika. We may also add: In the earlier *sūtra*, Bādarāyaṇa answers his opponent by citing examples from the worldly, common experiences, while in the later *sūtra* he meets his opponent by entering into the latter's own den.

When the above objection is answered, then all the other available important systems, such as the Bauddha, the Jaina, the Āgamika and also perhaps the Lokāyata are to be dealt with. All of them, Bādarāyaṇa rejects by the *śiṣṭāparigrahādhikaraṇa*; and in the rest of the *pāda* he answers various possible objections of all the opponent schools refuted so far. As we pointed out earlier, in the same order Bādarāyaṇa refutes his opponents in the *tarkapāda*. This feature certainly points to a sort of homogeneity of both the *smṛti* and the *tarka pādas* and this perhaps takes some wind out of the sails of certain modern scholars who are inclined to dub the *tarkapāda* as an interpolation to the treatise of Bādarāyaṇa.[19]

In fact Bādarāyaṇa appears to have planned these two *pādas* in a logical way. Hence we find all the *adhikaraṇas* in the *smṛti*-

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pāda being defensive in tone and all those in the *tarkapāda* offensive in nature. Of course, the *mahaddīrghādhikaraṇa* (*BS*, II, ii, 11) is an exception as this is defensive in character. However, one may be inclined to suspect whether the concerned *sūtra* of this *adhikaraṇa*, *viz.*, *BS*, II, ii, 11 could have been originally somewhere in the *navilakṣaṇtvādhikaraṇa* (in the *smṛtipāda*) which, as pointed out earlier, answers the common objection of both the Sāṅkhya and the Vaiśeṣika. May be the *sūtra* in question was initially read after the sixth or the tenth *sūtra* in the *smṛtipāda*. This arrangement would have certainly saved the *bhāṣyakara* (Śaṅkara) the repetition of the same objection in two *adhikaraṇas*. Again, in this suggested place of the *sūtra* the expression '*vā*' of the defensive *sūtra*, *viz.*, *mahaddīrghavadvā* etc., may get a much better treatment. For that *sūtra* now would be meant to offer an alternative solution to the objection raised in the *adhikaraṇa*.

Now it may be seen that in the *tarkapāda*, the Lokāyata school is not separately refuted. For, as the tradition goes, this school is not interested in the scripture, soul, Īśvara, world-creation; and the political scientists of ancient India seem to tell us that this system is out and out concerned only with the problems of governance of state.[20]

III

However, Śaṅkara seems to feel it appropriate to stigmatize the Vaiśeṣika system as *śiṣṭāparigṛhīta* "one not favoured *or* accepted by men of learning and discipline (in the *Vedas*)." Why? It is not impossible to find some probable reasons for it. For the Vaiśeṣika system, the Ācārya finds before him only the basic *sūtra* text of Kaṇāda. The Vaiśeṣika writers of the post-Kaṇāda age like Candramati (or Maticandra) and Bhāvaviveka[21] do not appear to be *śiṣṭas*. The former's work *Daśapadārthaśāstra* had not been popular among the Indian pundits and it is available only in its Chinese translation. Only some scanty references to the latter's work are available, that too from the Buddhists' works. Some of the commentators of Śrī Śaṅkara believe that the Ācārya had with him an ancient *bhāṣya* on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* and they call it *Rāvaṇabhāṣya*.[22] The name Rāvaṇa itself smacks of demoniac. Very probably the author was not a *śiṣṭa* and the work was not a popular one as it is unknown otherwise. Further, as we saw above, Śaṅkara is most probably not aware of Praśastapāda's *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* and Uddyotakara's defence of the Vaiśeṣika theories. Hence it is but natural that the Ācārya should discre-

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dit the Vaiśeśika system as *śiṣṭāparigṛhīta* and semi-nihilistic.

The Bhagavatpāda is a very highly venerated philosopher. Hence the above remarks of his probably affected to some extent the growth of the Vaiśeṣika literature in the subsequent period. For example, the Ācārya's illustrious commentator Vācaspati Miśra, a leading *śiṣṭa* of the 9th-10th century A.D., who is well known for his rare versatality, has contributed enormously to every one of the orthodox schools of philosophy. Though he has undertaken the pain of editing the *Nyāyasūtra* twice[23] and has written the voluminous and authoritative *Tātparyaṭīkā* for the Nyāya system, he has totally ignored the Vaiśeṣika system. The *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha*, the most authoritative and very early treatise of the system, next only to the *sūtra* had to wait long centuries for Vyomaśiva, Udayana and Śrīdhara, all belonging to the later half of the 10th century to get regular commentaries. The status of the *Kaṇādasūtra* was still worse. It had to wait many more centuries to have a regular commentary, that too not by authors of high repute. All these perhaps indicates that the Ācārya voices not his own view only, but also the general thinking of the *śiṣṭas* of the age.

Śaṅkara's way of criticism of the Vaiśeṣika atomism and of inherence has certainly influenced the famous Navya-Nyāya giant, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi, the author of the commentery *Dīdhiti*. Hence he finds fault with the Vaiśeṣika inference of establishing the reality of the atom and binary and totally rejects it. He approves only the trinary as the ultimate unit (*upādāna*) obviously because that has been accepted under the name *trasareṇu* by the *śiṣṭas* like Manu and Yājñavalkya.[24] He also builds up the theory of plurality and perceptibility of inherence as against the early Vaiśeṣika theory of singularity and unperceptibility of the same.[25]

The Ācārya's view of Kaṇāda's system as *śiṣṭāparigṛhīta* and semi-nihilist, having much common with the Bauddha nihilism has no doubt led Brahmānanda Sarasvatī (17th century) to brand the Vaiśeṣika as the lowest among the orthodox philosophers. (*vaiśeṣiko hi āstikānām adhamaḥ*).[26] In recent times also the Ācārya's criticism has driven Anantakrishna Sastri to stigmatize the Vaiśeṣikas as confirmed atheists (...*vaiśeṣikāḥ nāstikā eva*).[27]

IV

Left to himself, Śaṅkara is totally against refuting opponents because that generates ill-will.[28] But he finds Bādarāyaṇa himself refuting the opponents. Hence as a good, powerful and faithful

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commentator of the *Brahmasūtra*, the Ācārya feels obliged to refute the Vaiśeṣika as forcibly as possible. At the same time the Ācārya finds none of the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa is found attacking any exclusive doctrine of the Naiyāyikas.[29] On the contrary a vast majority of the *sūtras* of the *Brahmasūtras* are found to be in the form of *hetu* (*i.e.* the middle term with ablative case-ending) — a feature indicative of the *sūtrakāra's* preference to the syllogistic method (*nyāyaprayoga*) which is developed and refined meticulously by the Naiyāyikas. Further, we know that Śaṅkara likes very much *tarka* or *nyāya* (inference) supported by scripture and hates the same if it is divorced by the scripture.[30] He must have felt happy, while he found in the field an illustrious fore-runner in the author of the *Nyāyabhāṣya*, Vātsyāyana, treating inference in the same line, *i.e.*, praising *anumāna* if it goes well with perception and scripture and disparaging the same if it goes counter to them.[31]

Moreover, as we indicated above, the Naiyāyikas do not build up theories of world-creation and the like, separately from the ones propounded by the Vaiśeṣikas. In fact, Lakshmana Sastri Dravida appears to be on the right side when, after a thorough analysis of the question from different angles, he affirms that the main aim of the Nyāya system is only to teach a scientific fool-proof methodology of investigation to the students of each and every branch of science so that they may arrive at the truth in a logical manner, that the system does not intend to build up philosophical doctrines of its own such as those concerned with world-creation, God, etc., and that the early Nyāya works handle the Vaiśeṣika doctrines and defend them only by way of illustrating how to apply the method of investigation, the system teaches.[32]

All these facts perhaps go to explain why Śaṅkara has felt it not necessary to refute any of the specific Naiyāyika doctrines. In fact he has a positive and appreciative view of the system. Hence in the *samanvayādhikaraṇa* (*BSB*, I, i, 4), he quotes a *sūtra* from the *Nyāyasūtra*[33] to substantiate his own thesis that Self-realisation does not create salvation (because it exists always); but it only eliminates the superimposition (*mithyājñāna*), etc., that stand in one's way of attaining salvation. In this context the Bhagavatpāda actually refers to Akṣapāda not by name but by the honorific epithet *ācārya* (honourable teacher) and appreciate the weight of logic his *sūtra* contains (*ācāryapraṇītaṁ nyāyōpabṛhmitaṁ sūtram*). Again, in the *patyadhikaraṇa* of the *tarkapāda* (*BSB*, II, ii, 37), the

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Ācārya recognises Akṣapāda as an expert in logic (*nyāyavit*) and quotes another *sūtra* from the *Nyāyasūtra*[34] for his own advantage against the Māheśvara's thesis that Īśvara is the cause of the universe by merely being its controller. In this it is good to note that Ācārya Śaṅkara seems to quote only Akṣapāda among the *darśanakāras* for his own advantage, while others he quotes perhaps only to refute.

However, the Ācārya does not hesitate to preach forcibly his thesis that all means of cognition (*pramāṇāni*) — be it direct perception or scripture — are concerned only with that cognizer (*pramātā*), who is a victim of nescience (*avidyāvadviṣayāṇi*), *i.e.*, nescience is the basic need for all means of cognition to function and their validity is conditioned by nescience. This is, indeed, an indirect way of digging at the very foundation of the Nyāya school that stands on *prāmāṇyavāda*, *i.e.*, the doctrine of absolute validity of cognition and its means, and hence enthrones the means-of-cognition above all the other categories, by working out a unique epistemological scheme and by earning for itself the consequential appellation, *pramāṇaśāstra*, 'A science of means of cognition'. Further, the Naiyāyika doctrines are diametrically opposed to some of the basic tenets of Advaita system, such as (1) the embodied soul (*jīva*) is the very knowledge itself (*jñānasvarūpa*); (2) the Self, therefore shines on its own accord (*svaprakāśa*); and (3) it is ultimately and totally identical with the supreme Brahman, and so on. The Bhagavatpāda does not take special pain to refute those doctrines of the Naiyāyikas. Here he perhaps feels that founding his own doctrines on the unshakable rock-bed of the supreme Upaniṣadic principles, is itself an effective way of refuting the Naiyāyika.

NOTES

1. *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, IV, v, 8; *cf. ācāryaśāstrādirūpeṇa mokṣasukhaṁ karoti iti mayaskaraḥ* — Sāyaṇa's *Bhāṣya* thereon.

2. *The Nyāyavārttika Tātparyaṭīkā*, Introductory portion.

3. See *NS*, IV, i, 19-21; ii, 23-25; and the *Nyāyabhāṣya* and the *Nyāyavārttika* thereon.

4. *Cf.* Śaṅkara's *Gītābhāṣya*, introductory part and under the *Gītā*, II, 39.

5. *I.e.*, the doctrine that the effect does not exist before its creation and after its destruction.

6. *I.e.*, the doctrine that the effect does exist even before its creation and after its destruction.

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7. *I.e.*, the doctrine that the sense organs are the products of the *bhūtas* 'the elements'.

8. *I.e.*, the doctrine that the sense-organs are not the products of the elements.

9. The *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Part I (Text): Ed. R.P. Kangle (Bombay University, 1960), p. 4. The derivation intended is: *anu īkṣā anvīkṣa, anumānam; tayā pravartate iti ānvīkṣikī vidyā.* See also the *Nyāyabhāṣya*, under I, i, 1.

10. *Cf.* also *BS*, II, i, 1-2 and *BSB* thereon.

11. *sāṅkhyādayastu pradhānādīni kāraṇāntarāṇi anumimānāḥ tatparatayaiva vedavākyāni yojayanti* — *BSB*, I, i, 5.

12. *Cf... anumānaṁ saṁsāri vyatirikteśvarāstitvādi-sādhanaṁ manyante īśvarakāraṇinaḥ (vaiśeṣikādayaḥ)* — *BSB*, I, i, 2. *Cf.* also *anumānena īśvarasiddhau taduccaritattvena vedasya prāmāṇya-niścayād vedo'pi pramāṇam.* See the *Kārikāvalī* with comm. Madras, 1929, p. 48 — the *Dinakarīya* comm. in the Īśvaravāda.

13. In view of the statement of Kauṭilya, one is given to doubt whether we are really correct in equating the Lokāyata with the Cārvāka and dubbing it as a philosophy rejecting inference altogether. Further is it possible to conceive of a philosophy (*darśana*) without inference?

14. It is significant that both Kauṭilya and Bādarāyaṇa mention Vaiśeṣika (*i.e.*, Yoga) system after the Sāṅkhya. Why do these authors refer to the Vaiśeṣika system by the term *yoga*? A separate paper is required to answer satisfactorily this interesting pertinent, but difficult question.

15. *Cf.*, *BSB*, I, iv, 28 and II, i, 12. In the case of the Sāṅkhya, the expression *pradhānamalla*, gains special significance. For, he is a wrestler who can fight with his fighting instrument *pradhāna*.

16. *I.e.* the doctrine of the material cause (*upādāna*) transforming itself as the effect.

17. *I.e.*, the doctrine of the material cause commencing the effect afresh.

18. *I.e.*, the doctrine of the supreme Brahman being the ultimate cause of th world.

19. See *e.g.*, S.K. Belvalkar: *The Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyaṇa with the commentary of Śaṅkarācārya* Ch. II, Quarter II: Ed. with Translation, Notes: Poona, 1924, p. [2] of Belvalkar's note.

20. *Cf. aihika-vyavahāraprasādhanaparaṁ lokāyatam. lokāyato hi rājā rāṣṭrakaṇṭakam ucchedayati* — Somadeva's *Nītivākyāmṛta*, quoted

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by K.P. Kangle in his *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, part II (Trans.), University of Bombay, 1963, p.7, note. 10.

21. For details regarding these authors see K. H. Potter: *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* Vol. II: *The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika upto Gaṅgeśa*: (Delhi, 1977) pp. 274 ff.

22. See the *Ratnaprabhā* comm., under *BSB* II, ii, 11.

23. See S. Sankaranarayanan: "The Colophone in the *Bhāmatī* — A New Study," *The Adyar Library Bulletin*, Vo. 49 (1985) pp. 34-65.

24. See the *Manusmṛti*, VIII, 132 and the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* I. 361.

25. For details see the *Padārthatattvanirūpaṇa* by Raghunātha Śiromaṇi with comm., Ed. Vindhyesvariprasada Dvivedin: *Pandit* Series, Benares 1916: pp. 11 ff and 76. See also *Kārikāvalī* with commentaries: Ed. C. Sankararama Sastri: Balamanorama Press, Madras, 1923: *Dinakarīya* comm. pp. 137, 292-93; *Kārikā* 62, (p. 438) and commentaries thereon.

26. See the author's *Nyāyaratnāvalī* on Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's *Siddhāntabindu*, Introduction to verse 1 of the *Daśaślokī* of Śrī Śaṅkara. See the *Siddhāntabindu* with commentaries: Ed. S. Subrahmanya Sastri: Mahesh Research Institute, Varanasi, 1978: p. 49.

27. See *Brahmasūtra-Śāṅkarabhāṣya* with *Bhāmatī*, etc: Ed. Ananthakrishna Sastri, *etal*: NSP, 1917: Sastri's Intro. p. 1.

28. *Cf*: *kīm parapakṣa-nirākaraṇena paravidveṣakareṇa* — the Ācārya's introduction to the *Tarkapāda*. This unique attitude of the Ācārya seems to have influenced his pet disciple Padmapādācārya to plan, even in the very beginning, to comment only on the first five *pādas* of his Master's *Sūtrabhāṣya* and not to enter the *Tarkapāda* intended to refute the opponents; hence his commentary came to be known by the title *Pañcapādikā* 'a treatise on five *pādas*'.

29. May be Akṣapāda's *Nyāyasūtra*, we have now, is later than the *Brahmasūtra*, as some modern researchers are inclind to think. But we have seen above Kauṭilya glorifying *ānvīkṣikī* and Vātsyāyana enthroning the *Nyāyaśāstra* as the *ānvīkṣikī* par excellence. Even in the *Upaniṣads* the science of *Nyāya* or *Tarka* is mentioned under the name *Vākovākya* among the various popular subjects taught in the contemporary educational institutions (See the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, VII, i, 2-4 and the *Śāṅkarabhāṣya* thereon). All these vouch for Jayantabhaṭṭa's statement that even prior to

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Akṣapāda there had been *Nyāyavidyā* (*Cf.* the *Nyāyamañjarī*, Vol. I Chowkhamba, 1936: p. 5).

30. See *e.g.*, *BSB*, II, i, 6.

31. *Cf*: *pratyakṣāgamāśritam .... yat punar anumānam pratyakṣa-viruddham āgamaviruddhaṁ vā nyāyābhāsaḥ saḥ* — Vātsyāyana under *NS*, I, i, 1.

32. For details, see the *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* of Śrīharṣa with comm.: Ed. Lakshmana Sastri Dravida, Chowkhamba 1916: editor's lengthy and thought-provoking introduction in Sanskrit.

33. *I.e.*, *duḥkha-janma-pravṛtti-doṣamithyājñānānām uttarottarā-pāye tadanantarāpāyād apavargaḥ* — *NS*, I, i, 2.

34. *I.e.*, *pravarttanālakṣaṇā doṣāḥ* — *NS*, I, i, 18.

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14

DETERMINATION AND POSITION OF TARKA — NAIYĀYIKAS VIS A VIS ŚĀṄKARITES

ASOKE CHATTERJEE SASTRI

The philosophers demanded that the disciplined mind should control its fancies and bow beneath the hard yoke of facts. An accurate account of the experimental methods is possible only with the development of the experimental sciences; and in the absence of the latter, the Indian logician's view about scientific method are not of great interest. They were aware of the general problem of induction and the method of careful observation of the facts of nature by which universal propositions are arrived at.

Nature does not supply us with positive and negative instances of the right kind to help us to establish or reject theories. The Naiyāyika says that we may employ the method of *tarka* or indirect proof to obtain the negative evidence. If the general proposition, "Where there is smoke, there is fire," is not valid, then its contradictory that 'sometimes smoke is not accompanied by fire' must be true. In other words, fire is not the invariable antecedent of smoke. But we cannot deny that fire is the cause of smoke. Thus *tarka* or reductio is employed to strengthen a universal proposition based on positive instances of uninterrupted agreement. It is also a way of establishing a hypothesis. By pointing out the absurdities in which we are landed, if we deny a suggested hypothesis, *tarka* tends to confirm the hypothesis. It shows that no other hypothesis is able to account for the facts.

There is divergence of opinions from the ancient times as to the nature of *tarka*. To some, *tarka* or reductio is not different from doubt (*saṁśaya*) and final ascertainment (*nirṇaya*). Some philosophers opine that reductio is but another name for inference (*anumāna*). They think that '*hetu*' (reason), '*tarka*' (reductio), *nyāya* (logic) are all synonymous with inference. According to some school, logical inference can be called *tarka*. But Uddyotakara has refuted all these views. The Jainas regard *tarka* (*ūha*) as

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a form of indirect valid knowledge (*parokṣa-pramāṇa*) as different from inference. The Buddhists generally call '*tarka*' *prasaṅgānumāna*. A form of argument which compels the opponent to admit 'the illogical' (*aniṣṭa*) is called *prasaṅgānumāna*. According to some, *tarka* is regarded as a specific kind of doubt in the Vaiśeṣika system.

As Gautama enumerates '*tarka*' separately as one of the sixteen categories, Uddyotakara, after discussing it thoroughly remarks, "*bhavet ityeṣa pratyaya ityasya svarūpamiti*," *i.e.* it is a specific form of knowledge conveying possibility (*sambhāvanā*) and different from doubt and final ascertainment.

Following Gautama, its nature would be that it is neither included in the instrument of valid knowledge, nor is it itself an independent instrument of valid knowledge, because by itself it cannot lead to the ascertainment of truth. Still, it assists in the ascertainment of truth by way of helping the instrument of valid knowledge employed. Vātsyāyana gives an example: "Is this birth produced by an impermanent cause or by a permanent one, or is it accidental (*ākasmika, i.e.*, without any cause)?"

In cases of such objects the real nature of which is not known, *tarka* (*ūha*) is employed by way of adducing some reasons.

If birth is produced by an impermanent cause, then, because of the destruction of the cause, the cessation of (the series of) births becomes possible. Again, if (it is produced) by a permanent cause, then because of the impossibility of the destruction of the cause, the cessation of (the series of) births becomes impossible. Again, if (it is) accidental, then birth, being accidentally produced, will never cease and there being no cause of cessation, there will be no cessation of birth.

In the case of a *tarka* like this, the *pramāṇas* proving that birth is due to *karman* are assisted by a *tarka*.

Gautama himself defines *tarka* thus: 'Hypothetical argument' (*tarka*) is a form of deliberation (*ūha*) for determining the specific nature of an object whose real nature is yet to be known (*a-vijñāte tattve-arthe*) by pointing out the real grounds (for it).

Nyāya-Sūtra, I.1.40

It means a form of deliberation (*ūha*) which acts as an accessory to a *pramāṇa*, without itself being a *pramāṇa*. The purpose of such a deliberation is the attainment of 'the right knowledge of an object' (*tattva-jñāna*). How can it lead to such a knowledge? The reason is that it points to the real grounds or proofs in favour

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of the knowledge. But what is the nature of the object for which such a deliberation is appropriate? It has relevance for an object which is known in general but whose specific nature is not yet known. The question of such a deliberation does not arise in case of an object which is completely unknown or the specific nature of which is already determined.

Vātsyāyana begins with a reference to the situation that calls for *tarka*. There arises an enquiry into the exact nature of an object. This is followed by a doubt provoked by the possibility of contradictory possibilities as to its real nature. *Tarka* dispels this doubt by way of pointing to the ground in favour of one of these alternatives.

Here is an example. The enquiry takes the form: "I should like to know the exact nature of the knower that cognises the various objects known." The doubt takes the form: "Is this (knower) of the nature of something produced or of something not produced?" One then asserts the specific characteristic in favour of which one finds definite ground, in respect of the object (the specific nature of which is) doubted and the specific nature of which is unknown. The assertion takes the following form: Only when the knower is of the nature of something not produced (*i.e.* eternal), it can enjoy the fruits of its own actions (*i.e.* can enjoy the pleasure or pain resulting from the actions of its previous births). Further, of suffering, birth, activity, evil and false knowledge — each of the succeeding one causes the preceding one and on the removal of each succeeding one is removed the immediately preceding one, thus ultimately resulting in liberation. In this way, there can be worldly existence and liberation (only on the assumption that the knower is of the nature of something not produced). On the assumption that the knower is of the nature of something produced, there can be no explanation of worldly existence and liberation. If the knower is viewed as something produced, it will have to be considered as being conjoined with body, senses, mind and awareness (only) at the moment it is produced and hence this (connection with body etc.) will not be the result of its own previous action. When something is produced, it is produced not as something previously existing and hence there can be no enjoyment of the fruits of the knower's own actions which are non-existing or completely destroyed. On the same ground, the same knower cannot have connections with various bodies (in its different births) nor can it have absolute

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cessation of connection with body (during liberation). The alternative, for which no adequate ground is ascertained, is not asserted. Deliberation of this nature is known as *tarka.*

By asserting the grounds in favour of true knowledge, *tarka* strengthens the efficacy of the instrument of valid knowledge and from this enhanced efficacy results right knowledge. *Tarka* does not by itself establish the means of right knowledge or right knowledge as such. It simply asserts one of the characteristics by pointing to the real grounds, but does not (by itself) ascertain or establish or demonstrate in the form: "The object must be of such and such nature."

Tarka, which thus is an accessory to the instruments of valid knowledge, is mentioned in the *vāda-sūtra* (1. 1. 42) conjointly with *pramāṇa*, because it lends support to *pramāṇa.*

However, Udayana — and following him, Varadarāja — defines *tarka* as *aniṣṭaprasaṅga*, literally a form of agrument which imposes on the opponent, an admission of 'the illogical' (*aniṣṭa*). The illogical or *aniṣṭa* may be either the rejection of what is well-proved or the acceptance of the unproved.

"*tarka'niṣṭa-prasaṅgaḥ syādaniṣṭaṁ dvividhaṁ smṛtam*
prāmāṇikaparityāgas tathetaraparigrahaḥ" — *Tārkikarakṣā.*

Thus, *e.g.*, if one asserts that water cannot quench thirst, it will be objected that no thirsty person should drink water. But this will be an admission of the illogical, because the quenching of thirst by water is well proved. Again, if one asserts that water causes internal burning, it will be objected that by drinking water I should also suffer from internal burning. But this will be an admission of the illogical, because the possibility of water producing internal burning is unproved. It should be noted that while explaining the *Bhāṣya*, Vācaspati also speaks of *tarka* as *aniṣṭāpatti*, *i.e.* an admission of 'the illogical'. Actually whatever is contradicted by *pramāṇa* is 'the illogical' (*aniṣṭa*) and hence *tarka* is called 'the admission of the contradicted (*bādhitārthaprasaṅga*). The other name of it is '*saṁśayavyudāsa*' or 'dispeller of doubt'.

The followers of Navya-nyāya explain *tarka* in strict inferential terminology. *Tarka*, according to them, is the wrong attribution (*āropa*) of the pervader (*vyāpaka*) resulting from the wrong attribution of the pervaded (*vyāpya*) in an object where the absence of the pervader is already established. Thus, *e.g.* in the fire-smoke relation, fire is pervader and smoke is pervaded and it is well-established that fire does not exist in water. If, however, somebody wrongly attributes smoke to water, the following *tarka*

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could be posed against him: If the water contains smoke, it should as well contain fire. The function of such a *tarka* is twofold. First, it helps to 'ascertain in the right nature of an object' (*viṣaya-pariśodhaka*) — *e.g.*, the absence of smoke in water. Secondly, it helps to 'ascertain the invariable relation between the two terms (*vyāpti-grāhaka*) by negating the possibility of any doubt about it; *e.g.* the possible doubt about the universal relation existing between smoke and fire is dispelled by the *tarka* that if there is no such universal relation between the two, then there should be between them no causal connection either.

Varadarāja says that the components of *tarka* are fivefold:

"*vyāptistarkapratihatiravasānaṁ viparyaye*
aniṣṭānanukūlatve iti tarko'ṅgapañcakaḥ"

The *vyāpti* or invariable relation between the pervader (*āpādya*, *i.e.*, which is the object of the undesirable conclusion, *e.g.* fire) and the pervaded (*āpādaka*, *i.e.* by admission of which, undesirable conclusion occurs, *e.g.* smoke) is the first and foremost component of reductio. Secondly, non-opposition by the counter-reductio which contradicts that reductio is another part of it. Thirdly, the termination in the absence of the pervader takes place. Fourthly, the undesirability of the pervader or '*āpādya*' and finally the disfavour of that undesirable conclusion or incompletion of the opponent form the rest part of it. If any one of these is absent, then it should not be a proper reductio or *tarka*. Then it should be called pseudo-reductio (*tarkābhāsa*).

Udayana classifies *tarka* under five heads, *viz.* (1) *ātmāśraya* or self-dependence, (2) *anyonyāśraya* or reciprocal dependence, (3) *cakrakāśraya* or vicious circle, (4) *anavasthā* or infinite regress (5) *aniṣṭaprasaṅga* or the acceptance of the illogical. Mādhavācārya in his *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha* enunciates the first four along with seven more, *viz.* '*vyāghāta*' or contradiction etc. under reductio or *tarka*. But he classifies it into eleven kinds without any explanation. Veṅkaṭanātha takes the first four along with '*virodha*' or opposition and impossibility or '*asambhava*'. Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa enumerates cumbrousness (*gaurava*) and brevity (*lāghava*) along with the first four.

Tarka is not only an accessory to inference, but also to the attainment of right knowledge through other means of knowledge. Following Udayana, Varadarāja also says clearly — "*pratyakṣādeḥ pramāṇasya tarko'nugrāhako bhavet.*" Later, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa also says —

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yataḥ pratyakṣaśabdādipramāṇānyakhilānyapi
tarkaṁ vinā na jīvanti pratyakṣe tāvadīkṣyatām
tasmāt sarvapramāṇānāṁ tarko'nugrāhakaḥ sthitaḥ.
sādhye viparyayāśaṅkāvicchedastadanugrahaḥ.
(*Mānameyodaya*)

In fact, to ascertain the meaning of *dharma* or virtue from the *Veda* and other *śāstras*, by discarding the false implications (*arthabhāṣā*), it is necessary to apply reduction so that the real purport may be established.

But Vedāntins like Śaṅkara did not take *tarka* in any such technical sense like Naiyāyikas, the logicians of ancient India such as Gautama, Gaṅgeśa, etc. Śaṅkara, the great exponent of monistic Vedānta like other Indian philosophers take '*tarka*' in ordinary sense. He takes '*tarka*' simply in the sense of reasoning having noted the word '*tarka*' being mentioned in the various old scriptures connoting 'ordinary reasoning'. As for example, the word *tarka* occurs in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* —"*naiṣā tarkeṇa matirāpaneyā.*" It is found in this sense in the *Mahābhārata*, *Manusaṁhitā* and *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* also — all these old scriptures contain the word '*tarka*' in the sense of non-technical and simple reasoning. Śaṅkara also notices keenly the word *tarka* occurring in the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*tarkāpratiṣṭhānāt*". Śaṅkara comments on this *sūtra* without explaining the word *tarka* from any technical point of view.

Let *tarka* be used in the ordinary sense of reasoning, the question is: what is the attitude of Śaṅkara as a staunch monist as well as a strict follower of scriptures towards this *tarka*?

"*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*" — this *śruti* statement equally stresses on *manana* for *ātmadarśana*. The *manana* is not so much technical and is nothing but ordinary logic or reasoning. It is true that the charge is very often levelled against Śaṅkara's Vedānta that its theories are not based on independent reasoning but on authorities like *śruti* and *smṛti*, and therefore, they are dogmatic rather than critical. But the charge is not fully correct. Śaṅkara's Vedānta, being like the other Vedānta systems, starts from the Upaniṣad (*vedānto nāma upaniṣatpramāṇam*), and so necessarily lay prime importance to *śruti*, the final authority and then *smṛti* which is the close follower of *śruti*, but still the theories he expounds are supported also by strong independent arguments and even if the support of authority, *śruti* and *smṛti*, are withdrawn, the theories can stand well on their own foot and can challenge any reverse theory established elsewhere on

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independent reasoning alone.

Śaṅkara, while writing his commentary with all skill and carefulness, shows that the *Vedāntasūtras* too have great regard for *tarka* or reasoning in the realm of philosophy, although their chief motto is to show human beings the path of truth and salvation. This great monist commentator clearly emphasises that the author of the *Brahmasūtra*, Bādarāyaṇa is also very much aware of *tarka, i.e.*, logic and reasoning and in the first and second *pādas* of the second *adyāya* of *Vedāntasūtra*, he resorts to *tarka* with a view to establishing his Vedānta doctrines thereupon. (*cf.* "*dvitīye smṛti-tarkābhyām avirodhaḥ*" — *Vaiyāsikanyāyamālā*). Śaṅkara while commenting on the *sūtra* —

"*na vilakṣaṇatvād asya tathātvaṁ ca śabdāt*"

draws our attention stating thus — "*tarkanimitta idānīm ākṣepaḥ parihriyate.*" It means that from this *sūtra* onwards Brahmasūtrakāra proceeds to establish Brahma-causality of the phenomenon on the grounds of *tarka* which is something like arguments, logic, reasoning, debate, etc. Śaṅkara, a staunch devotee of both scriptures and monism, cites scriptural statement for demonstrating that scripture also has regard for *tarka* –

"*śrutir api śrotavyo mantavyaḥ iti*
śravaṇavyatirekeṇa mananaṁ vidadhātī
tarkam apy ādartavyaṁ darśayati"

Śaṅkara, thereafter, closely following the foot-steps of *sūtrakāra* Bādarāyaṇa, discusses elaborately how his monistic doctrine, independent of *śruti* and *smṛti* if and when necessary can stand well absolutely on logic and reasoning. As for example, the logic of the opponents like Śāṅkhya is that Brahman cannot be the material cause of this phenomenon. Why? The logical argument (*tarka*) of the opponents is that this is because the material cause Brahman is pure, consciousness, infinite, etc; whereas phenomenon is reverse, *i.e.* phenomenon is impure, unconscious, finite, etc.; and as such Brahman cannot be the material cause of the phenomenon. There cannot be any causal relation between the two dissimilar (*vilakṣaṇa*) things. Śaṅkara comments —

"*cetanaṁ brahma... brahma hi jagadvilakṣaṇaṁ cetanaṁ śuddhaṁ ca śrūyate.*"

The Śāṅkarites argue, with the help of concrete examples picked up from the empirical world, that the causal relation is also found between two dissimilar things — between unconscious cowdung (cause), and conscious scorpion (effect) (*vide sūtra* — "*dṛśyate tu*"

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2.1.6). Śaṅkara comments:

"*yad uktaṁ vilakṣaṇatvāt nedaṁ jagad brahmaprakṛtikam iti nāyam ekāntaḥ dṛśyate hi loke cetanatvena prasiddhebhyaḥ puruṣādibhyaḥ vilakṣaṇānāṁ keśanakhādīnām utpattiḥ, acetanatvena prasiddhebhyaḥ gomayādibhyaḥ vṛścikādīnām.*"

The word "*nāyam ekānta*" used by Śaṅkara clearly exhibits that Śaṅkara, not only a devoted scripturist but also a strong logician was not unaware of the logical fallacy of *anaikāntika* which he wants to apply on the opponents by stating that there are many exceptions, *vyabhicāra* to the rule "where there is *vilakṣaṇatva* (dissimilarity), there is non-causality." From Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *sūtra*, "*dṛśyte tu*" (2.1.6) and onwards, the supporting scriptural quotations have become less cited and are being replaced by the strong logical arguments although the former ones are the basis of Śaṅkara's Vedānta philosophy.

Śaṅkara, right on the track of the *Vedāntasūtras* such as "*racanānupapatteś ca nānumānam*" and onwards, goes on hurling vehemently the poignant arrows of arguments and counter-arguments on the disputants only to prove that he is also master in fighting out the fallacious arguments of the opponents without having the least dependence on '*śruti*'—"*vākyanirapekṣaḥ svatantrastadyukti-pratiṣedhaḥ.*" The famous Śāṅkarite Vedāntist Bhāratītīrtha in the *Vaiyāsikanyāyamālā* declares regarding the subject-matter of the 1st and 2nd quarter of the 2nd chapter of the *Vedānta-sūtra.*

"*dvitīye smṛtitarkābhyām avirodho'nyaduṣṭatā.*"

The statement proves tenable if we go through Śaṅkara's commentaries on *sūtras* of 1st quarter, especially the 2nd quarter of 2nd chapter of the *Vedāntasūtra* where we find Śaṅkara is at large to refute the logics of the opponents *i.e.* the logics of the philosophy of Sāṅkhya, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Bauddha and Jaina. The whole second quarter of second chapter is devoted to refuting the opponents' arguments in various philosophical doctrines only to prove that Advaita philosophy independent of *śruti* and *smṛti* can vie with any system of Indian philosophy by applying sheer instruments of logic. Vācaspati Miśra, the author of the *Bhāmatī*, most skilfully exposes the qualities of logical acumen in the commentaries of Śaṅkara (*cf. sūtra*: "*racanānupapatteśca nānumānam*"). Śaṅkara, in his commentary refutes the Sāṅkhya logic by stating that nowhere in the empirical world it is found that any unconscious principle can create any purposeful objects —

"*nācetanaṁ loke cetanānadhiṣṭhitaṁ svatantraṁ kiñcid dṛṣṭam.*" 2.1.1).

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Vācaspati's sub-commentary throws more light of logic on the commentary of Śaṅkara by stating that Śaṅkara is correct in refuting the Sāṅkhya theory of unconscious causality of the phenomenon since if this Sāṅkhya theory be accepted, it will go against the apprehension of invariable concomitance in some cases of empirical examples:
"*samanvayāder hetoś cetanānadhiṣṭhitatvā viruddhacetanādhiṣṭhitatvena, mṛt-suvarṇādau dṛṣṭāntadharmiṇi vyāpteḥ upalabdheḥ viruddhatvāt.*"
Now it is clear that Śaṅkara, the great devotee of scriptures, was also a masterman in *tarka* which he can apply any time on any one whenever and wherever it is necessary.

Here one may ask why Śaṅkara unnecessarily resorts to *tarka* or logic which only gives rise to rancour which again is surely a stumbling block for summum bonum of life? Śaṅkara was aware of this query and he replies that he is doing only to thwart opponent's view so that common people seeking for summum bonum are not misguided by those wrong and below philosophical views of the opponents, "*tad-asāratopapādanāya prayatyate.*" Very often the word *tarka* has been found in Śaṅkara's philosophy being replaced by the words *anumāna*, *yukti*, *upapatti*, *manana*, etc., all used generally in the sense of argument, debate, reasoning, logic, inference. But the question is whether Śaṅkara gives exactly the *śruti* status to *tarka*. The answer is in the negative. He is vehemently vocal while declaring unequivocally that only the arguments favoured by *śruti* should be accepted for realisation, "*śrutyanugṛhīta eva hyatra tarko'nubhavāṅgatvenāśrīyate*" and negatively speaking, no debate, no logic, no argument whatsoever divorced from all faiths in the *Vedas* (*suṣkatarka*) should be accepted in Vedānta philosophy which primarily stands on the foundation of the speculative aspect of the *Vedas*. Śaṅkara points out that in the *sūtra* no logic, no theory, is accepted which goes against *āgama* or scriptures. Śaṅkara has quoted from various scriptural statements in the commentary on 2.1.6 to show that *tarka* not favoured by *śruti* is hollow, is fulite— "*naiṣā tarkeṇa matirāpaneya,*" "*acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṁstarkeṇa yojayet*" etc. The reason of futility of *tarka* lies in the fact that it cannot lead us ultimately to the summum bonum, the last goal of human life. Śaṅkara on the *sūtra*, "*tarkāpratiṣṭhānāt*" clearly shows that the trail of logics and counter logics supplied by human brains possesses a limited as well as a maximum capacity of thinking faculty driving us only to *regressus ad infinitum* (*vide* Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Vedāntasūtra* "*tarkā-*

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pratiṣṭhānāt": "*yasmān nirāgamā puruṣotprekṣāmātranibandhanās tarkā apratiṣṭhitāḥ sambhavanti utprekṣāyā niraṅkuśatvāt tathā hi kaiscid abhiyuktair yatnena utprekṣitās tarkāḥ... puruṣamativaiśvarūpyāt*). Logic minus scriptural support is non-established because *tarka* is unrestrained and goes on through the trial of logics and counter-logics put by intelligent people and thereafter more and more intelligent persons, and thus, further goes on endlessly leaving us ultimately to zero (*iti na pratiṣṭhitatvaṁ tarkāṇāṁ śakyaṁ samāśrayitum*). So, Śaṅkara in the introduction of his commentary on the 'Yājñavalkyakāṇḍa' of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* says that *upapatti* or logic, supported by *āgama* or vice-versa, surely helps us reach our goal of life.

In the commentary of "*athāto brahmajijñāsā*", Śaṅkara shows that Vedānta philosophy is not sheer argumentative. It is rather primarily scriptural. Monist Vedāntists, unlike the Naiyāyikas, have no regard for any other *pramāṇa* like *anumāna*, etc. They have only regard for perception since Brahman is *pratyakṣa* (*yat sākṣādaparokṣād brahma*), and when *jīva* learns from the scriptural statement "*tat tvam asi*" he at once achieves the perceptual knowledge through that scriptural statement that I am Brahman (*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*).

It might be so that Śaṅkara as monist Vedāntist tags *tarka* with *śruti*, but gradually after Śaṅkara, his monism went far beyond *śruti* (of course, not transgressing *śruti*), and we find his monism tightly fastened with the strong logics and counter-logics of the Śāṅkarite Vedānta logicians, some of whom appearing in the post-Nyāya period did not hesitate to make fullest utilisation of the subtlest logics of Navya-nyāya. Some of them again took *tarka* in the technical sense like the Naiyāyikas (*vide* the definition of *tarka* in *Citsukhī*: "*prāmāṇāntarādhigatavyāpyāvyāpakayor ekābhyupagamena dvitīyasya niyataprasañjanarūpas tarkaḥ.*") Śaṅkara and his veteran followers, particularly the three giants in Śāṅkara philosophy, Śrīharṣa, Citsukhācārya and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, authors of *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya*, *Tattvapradīpikā* and *Advaitasiddhi* respectively, have multiplled the logical arguments in their independent treatises where logical skill and dialectical subtlety attain highest altitude rarely found elsewhere.

Śrīharṣa argues against Udayana that it is futile to imagine that *tarka* dispels doubt concerning the invariable relation, as it itself depends on an invariable relation. According to him, "If there is contradiction, there must be doubt; if not (*i.e.* if there is

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no contradiction) it is all the better for doubt. How can contradiction dispel doubt or how can reductio dispel doubt?" His intention is '*tarka*' depends on a causal relation. But the causal relation cannot be a universal or invariable one.

Śaṅkara and his followers did deeply realise that so long as the reasoning faculty of man is not fully satisfied and the problems are not explained by reasoning there is no possibility of his accepting any theories of any philosophical doctrines — however precious those doctrines might have appeared to be. What is more, Śāṅkarites did realise that there are persons even in the realm of philosophical understanding who do not believe in any revealed scriptures or in any mystic intuitions but try to unveil the mystery of the universe in the light of *tarka*, *i.e.* logic and reasoning. And so these persons must be made satisfied neither by any revealed scriptures nor by mystic intuitions but only by sheer *tarka* known as reasoning or logic or argument or debate. There too the Śāṅkarites stand second to none.

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15

ŚAṄKARA AND CLASSICAL YOGA

T. R. ANANTHARAMAN

I. *Introduction*

Yoga is today universally recognized as among India's priceless gifts of perennial value to the human family. Despite being an ancient tradition, it has all along proved modern and relevant to every generation of seekers of human perfection. Identified today as the *science of total man* as well as the *technology of personality development*, its potentialities are accepted as formidable and its contributions rich and manifold, always in tune with the needs of the concerned age, whether it was the bygone age of the *Upaniṣads* or is the present age of science, technology and engineering.

As is well known, Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root "*yuj*" meaning to unite, to integrate or to cohere, and may thus be taken to represent the highest state of union, integration or coherence between individual or personal or human consciousness and cosmic or universal or divine consciousness. It represents the ultimate goal or the supreme objective of all human endeavours to attain perfection, to achieve all-round growth or to evolve consciously and in tune with nature and its laws. Concepts like transcendence and mysticism are associated with Yoga at this level, because the normal intellect finds it difficult to grasp or comprehend this seemingly superhuman, superconscious state. However, according to the foundation texts of the Yoga tradition, particularly the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is eventually the fully matured, purified, refined and sharpened intellect that will achieve, and savour the reportedly unlimited bliss of, this extra-ordinary union or integration or coherence that Yoga represents at its highest reaches. Thus the human intellect, that unique faculty that enables man to think, to reason, to analyse, to reflect and to meditate, has to play the central role in elevating him to the pinnacle of perfection that constitutes his brithright and is implied by the word Yoga in its original meaning.

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In its recorded history and continuous evolution spanning over 3000 years, the word Yoga has come to represent not only the ultimate goal of thinking man, but also the many practices, techniques, methods and ways that take man forward in the direction of that goal. Thus the literature on Yoga deals with dozens of Yogic paths like *karma-yoga* (the path of unselfish action), *bhakti-yoga* (the path of universal love), *jñāna-yoga* (the path of discriminative knowledge) and *rāja-yoga* (the royal path of classical yoga). In these yogic paths, the way of life and the relevant practices, observances, restraints, etc. are tailored to the specific needs of *sādhakas* or seekers in accordance with the states of evolution of their body-mind-intellect complexes.

In our present times it is of special interest to examine the teachings of Śaṅkara on Yoga in relation to those of the classical Yoga tradition.

II. *Classical Yoga Fundamentals*

Early *Upaniṣads* like *Īśa*, *Kaṭha* and *Śvetāśvatara*, the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Yoga-sūtras* of Patañjali are universally accepted as constituting the verbal foundation of the classical Yoga tradition. Among these, the 195 aphorisms of the *Yoga-sūtras*, generally assigned a date around 300 B.C. and divided in four sections, occupy a special position as the basic text of classical or *aṣṭāṅga* (eight-constituent) Yoga and seem to have provided the basis and inspiration for most latter-day texts and traditions of Yoga. Its scientific and systematic treatment of Yoga fundamentals makes Yoga Sūtras a priceless classic and ideal foundation for the impressive edifice of Yoga now slowly but surely emerging to meet the special and stringent needs of modern man during the incoming high-tech millennium, whose impact is already felt in most parts of the world.

To start with, it is appropriate to examine a few relevant *Yoga-sūtras* and reflect on what Patañjali says on the eight constituents or limbs of classical Yoga, keeping in mind the present mood and specific needs of the human family:

(II. 29) *yama-niyama-āsana-prāṇāyāma-pratyāhāra-dhāraṇā-dhyāna-samādhayaḥ aṣṭāv-aṅgāni*

Yama (withdrawal), Niyama (observances), Āsana (body posture), Prāṇāyāma (energy control), Pratyāhāra (abstraction), Dhāraṇa (concentration), Dhyāna (meditation), and Samādhi (absorption or unity experience) are the eight constituent parts (of the Yoga discipline).

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The above eight constituents of Yoga are popularly represented as steps, like the steps in a ladder, with Yama and Samādhi constituting the first and last steps. Such a representation may prove erroneous in practice, because progress in Yoga is not necessarily step-wise, but integrated and dependent on the actual conditions of the concerned individual's body, mind and intellect.

For the sake of convenience in treatment and understanding, these eight constituents of classical Yoga may be divided into the following three heads:

A. *Adhikāra-yoga* (the yogic way of life) made up of *Yamas* and *Niyamas*.

B. *Bahiraṅga-yoga* (the external yogic practice) made up of *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma* and *Pratyāhāra*.

C. *Antaraṅga-yoga* (the internal yogic practice) made up of *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*.

Naturally there is increasing complexity as one proceeds from one group to another, and some progress in the first group may well be a prerequisite for any appreciable progress in the second and third. However, in actual practice, there is no question of trying to attain absolute perfection in one before taking up the next.

III. *Yama and Niyama — The Ethical Foundation*

(II. 30) *ahimsā-satya-asteya-brahmacarya-aparigrahāḥ yamāḥ.*

The Yamas (abstinences) are: non-injury, non-falsheood, non-stealing, non-deviation from the law of one's being, and non-covetousness.

(II. 31) *ete jāti-deśa-kāla-samaya-anavacchinnāḥ sārvabhaumā mahāvratam.*

They constitute the universal vow that applies without any limitation of religious affiliation, country, time or occasion.

(II. 32) *śauca-santoṣa-tapaḥ-svādhyāya-īśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ.*

The Niyamas (observances) are: purity, contentment, austerity, self-study and dedication to the Supreme.

A little reflection on the five Yamas, abstinences or restraints, brings out their enormous importance in the maintenance of what one would today refer to as *external* or social ecology. It is through their sustained practice that one can hope to establish a peaceful, harmonious and happy social environment, which is a *sine qua non* for real progress of any type in case of individuals or groups, who form part of a community or nation. No wonder, Patañjali calls

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them *sārva-bhauma*, supreme or universal, obligatory for all and under *all* circumstances. It was also not a chance coincidence that in recent times Mahatma Gandhi, even though he was not a full-fledged votary of classical Yoga, included all the five Yamas in the eleven vows to be taken up seriously for practice and repeated everyday in the prayers by the inmates of his Ashrams.

The significance of Niyamas or observances can also be understood in a similar way. Here we are concerned with *internal* or individual ecology and the achievement as well as maintenance of health, balance, harmony and happiness in our body-mind-intellect complexes. It is often not realised that human bodies, minds and intellects can all become — and often are!— unclean and unhealthy and many special as well as persistent efforts are called for to restore purity and health to them and to maintain that state of total positive health throughout.

IV. *Bahiraṅga-yoga (Āsana, Prāṇāyāma and Pratyāhāra)*

(II. 46) *sthira-sukham-āsanam.*

Āsana is stable and comfortable body posture.

(II. 48) *Tato dvandva-anabhighātaḥ.*

In that (*i.e.*, Āsana) there is no obstruction from dualities (like pleasure and pain, heaviness and softness, heat and cold etc.).

(II. 49) *tasmin sati śvāsa-praśvāśayoḥ gati-vicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ.*

Prāṇāyāma is the control of the motion of inhalation and exhalation (of energy in general and breath in particular) following perfection therein (*i.e.*, in Āsana).

(II. 52) *tataḥ kṣīyate prakāśa-āvaraṇam.*

Through that (*i.e.*, Prāṇāyāma) hindrances to clear perception wither away.

(II. 54) *sva-sva-viṣaya-asamprayoge cittasya svarūpa-anukāra iva indriyāṇām pratyāhāraḥ.*

Pratyāhāra is the withdrawal of senses from their respective objects and their merger, as it were, in the mental being.

(II. 55) *tataḥ paramā vaśyatā-indriyāṇām.*

Through this (*i.e.*, Pratyāhāra) a great mastery over the senses (is achieved).

The above aspects of *bahiraṅga* or external yoga of the classical Yoga tradition are currently viewed by most practitioners as the whole of Yoga and at times get referred to also as Haṭha

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Yoga. Actually, *bahiraṅga-yoga* constitutes, primarily, a carefully planned psycho-physical preparation for the next and final step in Yoga *i.e.*, *antaraṅga* or Internal Yoga.

Through the practice of *bahiraṅga-yoga* the body is kept strong, supple and healthy, the emotions and passions are controlled and the mind is freed from the impact and interference of the senses. The *āsanas* involve static body positions, each pose being held for a prescribed duration following slow, rhythmic movements that exercise different parts of the body including the nerves and muscles. *Prāṇāyāma* is concerned with energy balance in general, but as combined with *āsana*, it involves breath control primarily. In *pratyāhāra* the outgoing senses are gradually withdrawn from the outer world and different relaxation levels are reached, contributing to physical repose and mental exhilaration. The *buddhi* (intellect) takes full control in *bahiraṅga-yoga* and the *manas* (mind) is disciplined and directed by it, to control the *indriyas* (senses) of the body. Thus a strong sense of physical and mental well-being and an abiding state of stable equilibrium are reached, paving the way for success in the practice of *antaraṅga-yoga*.

V. *Antaraṅga-yoga* (*Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi*)

(III. 1) *deśa-bandhas-cittasya dhāraṇā.*

Dhāraṇā is the fixing of the mental being on to an object.

(III. 2) *tatra pratyaya-ekatānatā dhyānam.*

Dhyāna is the uninterrupted flow of the stream of cognition towards that (*i.e.*, the object of Dhāraṇā).

(III. 3) *tadā-eva arthamātra-nirbhāsaṃ svarūpa-śūnyam-iva samādhiḥ.*

Samādhi is the state therein (*i.e.*, in Dhyāna), where there is consciousness only of the object, the presence of the subject being negated, as it were.

(III. 4) *trayam-ekatra saṁyamaḥ.*

These three together (Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi) constitute a great mastery.

(III. 5) *taj-jayāt prajñā-ālokaḥ.*

Through its attainment (*i.e.*, of this great mastery), the light of *Prajñā* (higher consciousness or knowledge) breaks through.

The above five Sūtras of Patañjali reveal the existence of a new, bright world generally not accessible, not even comprehen-

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sible, to most human beings. Long practice and perfection in *adhikāra-yoga* and *bahiraṅga-yoga* pave the way for the *antaraṅga-yoga* discipline, where we are concerned with progress, transformation, expansion, growth, evolution, call it what you will, in the inner depths or mental being of the human personality. A massive qualitative change takes place pithin man along with the awakening of *prajñā* and gradually leads him on to the status of a *sthita-prajña* (man of steadfast illumination or wisdom), whose hallmark is described in many old Sanskrit texts, particularly in those dozen beautiful verses towards the end of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the immortal and inspiring dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

According to the classical Yoga tradition, the attainment of *prajñā*, which represents further organic evolution of the cerebro-spinal system in man and an extreme refinement of his intellect, does not change the Yogi physically and mentally in any radical way, from a superficial point of view. Modern science has not so far come to grip with the concept of illumination as described above, for the simple reason that the working of the human brain and nervous system is still very imperfectly understood. However as described in many Yoga books, the subtle changes in qualities and attitudes of the advanced Yogi become "visible" to those close to him. To quote the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *sthita-prajña* strikes one as

(a) beyond passion, fear and anger (II, 56);
(b) devoid of possessiveness and egoism (II. 71);
(c) firm in understanding and unbewildered (V. 20);
(d) engaged in doing good to all living creatures (V. 25);
(e) without expectation, pure and skilful in action (VII. 14); and
(f) friendly and compassionate to all (XII. 13).

The advanced Yogi thus becomes a great blessing to society through his many rare and desirable attributes, which are *natural* to the high level of his spiritual attainment and are by no means cultivated.

VI. *Patañjali and Śaṅkara*

Although there are still doubts about the actual dates of Patañjali and Śaṅkara, all scholars are generally agreed that many cenuries, perhaps a full millennium, separated the life times of these two outstanding spiritual leaders. In fact, the *content* as opposed to the *language* of Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtras*, is widely accepted as

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pre-Buddhistic and reflective of a long, rich and unbroken teadition of Yogic practices. Patañjali draws heavily from the dualistic Sāṅkhya philosophy, which is recognized as the oldest of India's philosophical systems and has been attributed to Kapila, a sage who may have lived before the 6th century B.C. Śaṅkara is universally accepted, on the other hand, as the greatest exponent of Advaita Vedānta, the non-dualistic philosophy inspired by the *Upaniṣads*, that constitute the concluding portions of the Vedic revelation. All the same, Śaṅkara's pronouncements on the practice of Yoga have many things in common with the teachings of classical Yoga, as elucidated in the foregoing sections. There are also differences between them, which cannot be either overlooked as trivial or dismissed as unimportant.

As is well known, Śaṅkara's writings are vast, almost breathtaking in their quantity and quality. Apart from his famous commentaries on the *Brahma-sūtra*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* Śaṅkara has written so many learned, beautiful and elevating works in Sanskrit, short, medium and long, that it is difficult to choose one among them for comparison with Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtras*. In fact, the authenticity of some of these works has been questioned simply because they are too many to be attributed to a single author! For the purpose of this paper extracts from one of Śaṅkara's extremely popular masterpieces, *viz. Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi* (The Crest-jewel of Discrimination) made up of 580 thought-provoking verses will be used as representative of the great Master's views on the practice of Yoga.

Different expressions have come to be used in Indian spiritual literature to refer to the supreme objective of yogic, mystical or religious practices, primarily because of the ineffable nature of the transcendental experience or consciousness level associated with its realisation. Following Sāṅkhya terminology Patañjali uses the term '*kaivalya*' (isolation, *i.e.*, the dissociation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*) to refer to this ultimate objective of Yoga practice, while Śaṅkara prefers the term '*jīvan-mukti*' (liberation while living) for the same, following the Vedānta tradition. Thus the philosophical insights concerning the *nature* of the ultimate ineffable experience are also at variance with each other. Interestingly enough, Patañjali's insight in this regard is one of '*viyoga*' (separation) between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, while that of Śaṅkara is one of '*yoga*' (union between *Ātman* and *Brahman*).

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VII. *Śaṅkara and Adhikāra-yoga*

yogasya prathama-dvāraṁ vaṅnirodho-'parigrahaḥ,
nirāśā ca nirīhā ca nityam-ekāntaśīlatā. (367)

The first steps in Yoga are control of speech, non-covetousness, non-entertainment of expectations, non-involvement in worldly activities and constant cultivation of solitude.

Here, in place of the five Yamas (abstinences) and the five Niyamas (observances) of classical Yoga, Śaṅkara prescribes just three Yamas and two Niyamas. *Aparigraha* (non-covetousness) appears in both cases, while the other four items are different and in some respects more sweeping and less easy to understand and practise than the Yamas and Niyamas of the *Yoga-sūtras.*

śādhanānyatra catvāri kathitāni manīṣibhiḥ,
ādau nityānityа-vastu-vivekaḥ parigaṇyate. (18)

Sages have spoken here of four disciplines (to attain the Highest). First is enumerated discrimination between the Real and the unreal.

ihāmutra-phala-bhoga-virāgas-tadanantaram,
śamādiṣaṭka-sampattiḥ mumukṣutvam-iti sphuṭam. (19)

Next comes renunciation of the enjoyment of fruits (of one's actions) here as well as hereafter; (thereafter) come the six attributes (*śama,* calmness, *dama,* self-control, *uparati,* self-withdrawal, *titikṣā,* forbearance, *śraddhā,* faith, and *samādhāna,* settling of the intellect); (the last) is clearly the yearning for the Highest.

In a way the above-referred four disciplines also may be considered as part of the Yoga ethics or the Yogic way of life. The culture of the mind and the intellect is sufficiently stressed here, the path unfolded being perhaps more rigorous than in classical Yoga.

VIII. *Śaṅkara and Bahiraṅga-yoga*

Strange as it may seem, that which is stressed nowadays as constituting the most important aspect of Yoga practice, is hardly referred to in the *Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi. Āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* dominate todays's discussions on Yoga, but neither of these has been given *any* place in Śaṅkara's treatment of Yoga. Perhaps these two were taken for granted for the *sannyāsins* or recluses, to whom works like *Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi* seem to have been addressed primarily. *Uparati* or self-withdrawal, as referred to above, may be considered the equivalent of *pratyāhāra* in classical Yoga.

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The general attitude of Śaṅkara to works, practices and rituals of an external nature is well known and brought out effectively in the following oft-quoted verse:

cittasya śuddhaye karma na tu vastūpalabdhaye,
vastusiddhir vicāreṇa na kiñcit-karmakoṭibhiḥ. (11)

Works and practices lead to purification of the mental being; but not to perception of the ultimate reality. The latter is brought about by *vicāra* (discriminative reflection), not in the least by tens of works and practices.

IX. *Śaṅkara and Antaraṅga-yoga*

ato vicāraḥ kartavyaḥ jijñāsor ātma-vastunaḥ,
samāsādya dayāsindhum guruṃ brahmaviduttamam. (15)

Hence the seeker after the reality of *Ātman* (the individual self) should approach a *Guru* (spiritual teacher), who is among the best knowers of Brahman (the universal Self) and an ocean of mercy, and resort to *vicāra* (right reasoning and reflection).

This verse brings out the special hallmark of Śaṅkara's *antaraṅga-yoga, viz.*, the importance of a *Guru's* guidance, the need to reflect on Ātman and Brahman and the stress on *vicāra, i.e.*, the purely intellectual process of reasoning, discrimination, reflection, etc.

tataḥ śrutis-tan-mananaṁ satattva-
dhyānaṃ ciraṃ nitya-nirantaraṃ muneḥ,
tato'vikalpaṃ param-etya vidvān
ihaiva nirvāṇa-sukhaṃ samṛcchati. (70)

Then (following the initial preparation in Yoga) come the hearing of the truth, reflection on it and long, constant, as well as uninterrupted meditation on it by the Yogi, the man of reflection. Thereafter the learned seeker attains to the state of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* (supreme state of choiceless awareness) and realises the bliss of *nirvāṇa* even while living.

atīva sūkṣmam-paramātma-tattvaṁ
na sthūladṛṣṭyā pratipattum-arhati;
samādhinātyanta-susūkṣmavṛttyā
jñātavyam-āryaiḥ ati-śuddha-buddhibhiḥ. (360).

The reality of *Paramātman* (the supreme Self) is extremely subtle, and cannot be grasped by gross outgoing mental tendencies. It can only be known by noble souls with perfectly pure intellects in the *samādhi* state brought about by extra-ordinarily subtle states of consciousness.

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nirantarābhyāsavaśāt-tadittham
pakvaṃ mano brahmaṇi līyate yadā,
tadā samādhiḥ savikalpavarjitaḥ
svato-'dvayānandarasānubhāvakaḥ. (362)

When the mental being, thus purified and matured by constant practice (of *dhyāna*, meditation), unites with or merges in Brahman, then the *samādhi* state passes on from the *savikalpa* (with choice) to the *nirvikalpa* (choiceless) stage and leads directly and on its own to the realisation of the bliss of the one without a second.

In the foregoing beautiful verses the stages of *antaraṅga-yoga* culminating in *brahma-nirvāṇa* (the blissful merger in Brahman, the supreme Reality) are clearly spelt out with the authoritativeness of a seer or man of realisation. *Dhāraṇā* (concentration) of classical Yoga is replaced here by *manana* (reflection), but *dhyāna* (meditation) and *samādhi* (absorption or unity experience) constitute the important, common features of Śaṅkara's as well as classical Yoga. The *object* of meditation is left open by Patañjali, but is quite specifically identified as Brahman or *Paramātman* by Śaṅkara.

It is necessary to note here that the word "*samādhi*" is not used either by Patañjali or by Śaṅkara to denote any specific or definite state of the mental being. It stands for a very wide range of super-conscious or transcendental states which lead to and end in *kaivalya* (for Patañjali) or *jīvan-mukti* (for Śaṅkara). The state of *samādhi* must be attained first, before entry into the higher realms of consciousness is possible. It ushers the Yogi into new realms, but the investigation of those realms and mastery of the forces, powers and potentials pertaining to those realms has to be accomplished yet, gradually and according to one's intellectual capacity. Just as a long course of formal study qualifies a student to enter upon a course of independent research, the attainment of the *samādhi* state qualifies the Yogi to enter upon a full investigation of the superconscious realms. The word "*prajñā*" (higher consciousness or illumination) is associated with these *samādhi* states according to both Patañjali and Śaṅkara.

X. *Kaivalya and Jīvan-mukti*

The ultimate objective of Yoga is obviously beyond verbal description or comprehension by normal intellects. All the same, one or more aspects of the supreme yogic attainment get highlighted in any treatise on Yoga. In fact, the expressions used to

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denote the highest yogic state give some glimpses, as it were, of the ineffable, supreme experience. Following the references to the *sthita-prajña* earlier, it is appropriate to conclude this paper with descriptions of the omniscient majesty of the Yogi in the *kaivalya* state and the joyous abandon of the Yogi as *jīvan-mukta*:

tārakaṁ sarva-viṣayaṁ sarvārtha-viṣayam-akramaṁ
ceti vivekajaṁ jñānam.

(*Yoga-sūtras*, III. 55)

The highest knowledge (in *kaivalya*), born of the awareness of Reality, is truly liberating, includes cognition of all objects simultaneously, pertains to all objects and processes whatsoever (in the past, present and future) and also transcends the world process.

kvacin-mūḍho vidvān, kvacid-api mahārājavibhavaḥ,
kvacid-bhrāntaḥ, saumyaḥ, kvacid-ajagarācārakalitaḥ,
kvacit-pātrībhūtaḥ, kvacid-avamataḥ kvāpyavidataḥ,
caratyevam prājñaḥ, satata-paramānanda-sukhitaḥ.

(*Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi*, 542)

Sometimes considered a fool, sometimes treated as a sage, sometimes enjoying regal splendour, sometimes wandering aimlessly, sometimes wearing a benign expression, sometimes motionless like a python, sometimes honoured, sometimes insulted, sometimes unknown — thus marches on the man of *prajñā* (the *jīvan-mukta*), ever steeped in the supreme Bliss (of *Brahma-nirvāṇa*).

Whatever the expression may be for the ultimate yogic state, whether it is *kaivalya*, *jīvan-mukti* or *sthitaprajñatā*, all are agreed that the Master Yogi lives for others, having himself reached the ultimate goal. In Śaṅkara's inspiring words:

śāntā mahānto nivasanti santo
vasantavallokahitaṁ carantaḥ,
tīrṇāḥ svayaṁ bhīmabhavārṇavam-janān
ahetunānyānapi tārayantaḥ.

(*Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi*, 37)

These great souls, calm and magnanimous, live doing good to others, as does the spring season. Having themselves crossed the dreadful ocean of birth and death, they help others to cross the same, without any motive whatever.

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16

ŚAṄKARA, THE YOGA OF PATAÑJALI, AND THE SO-CALLED *YOGASŪTRABHĀṢYAVIVARAṆA*

WILHELM HALBFASS

1. The so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*, which is more properly called *Pātañjalayogaśāstravivaraṇa*,[1] was published in 1952 as volume 94 of the Madras Government Oriental Series. Its editors, who worked on the basis of a single manuscript preserved in Madras, did not hesitate to recognise this work as a genuine work of the great Śaṅkara.[2] In a stimulating study, and taking an approach otherwise completely different from that of the editors, P. Hacker also accepted — at least hypothetically — the authenticity of the text, presenting it as an early work by Śaṅkara, who later on would have "converted" from Yoga to Advaita Vedānta.[3] Hacker tries to provide evidence from Śaṅkara's later writings which would indicate a thorough familiarity with, and possibly an early allegiance to, the Yoga tradition of Patañjali. Apart from these general doctrinal observations, his argumentation for the authenticity of the text is primarily based upon the fact that the colophons of the manuscript give Śaṅkarabhagavat (or Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda) as the author; the general significance of the appearance of this name instead of Śaṅkarācārya had been pointed out by Hacker in an earlier article.[4] Hacker has *not*, as T. Leggett claims, examined the authenticity of the text by applying "linguistic and ideological tests devised by himself."[5] By and large, the text of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* and its doctrinal and commentarial peculiarities remain unexplored in Hacker's study.

Several years later, another leading Vedānta expert, H. Nakamura, agreed that the Vivaraṇa might indeed be a work by Śaṅkara himself, but he questioned Hacker's assumption that this would imply a "conversion" from Yoga to Vedānta.[6] S. Mayeda also tends to regard the text as authentic, although there is a certain vacillation in his statements.[7] T. Vetter, who follows Hacker's view, characterizes the Vivaraṇa as a work of little origina-

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lity in his *Studien zur Lehre und Entwicklung Śaṅkaras*.[8] Other authors who have worked with the text also seem to accept its authenticity.[9]

However, neither the editors of the 1952 edition nor P. Hacker and his successors seem to have paid attention to the fact that a part of the text was already published in 1931 (in volume 6 of the Madras University Sanskrit Series), as an appendix to Maṇḍana's *Sphoṭasiddhi* with the commentary *Gopālikā* by Parameśvara, and that its editor, S.K. Rāmanātha Śāstrī, was not at all inclined to accept the Vivaraṇa as a work by the famous Śaṅkara, author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. In his Sanskrit introduction to the edition, Rāmanātha Śāstrī deals not only with Parameśvara, the author of the *Gopālikā* but also with several other authors by this name, all members of the Payyūr family of Kerala which flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. He refers to the fact that Parameśvara I, author of the commentary *Svaditaṅkaraṅī* on Vācaspati's *Nyāyakaṇikā* (itself a commentary on Maṇḍana's *Vidhiviveka*) and grandfather of the author of the *Gopālikā*, presents himself as a disciple of "Śaṅkarapūjyapāda" (*śaṅkarapūjyapādaśiṣya*[10]). From his consultation of the unpublished *Nītitattvāvirbhāvavyākhyā* by the author of the *Gopālikā* (*i.e.* Parameśvara II), Rāmanātha Śāstrī, concludes that Śaṅkarapūjyapāda — one of several persons in the Payyūr family whose name was Śaṅkara — was not only the *vidyāguru*, but also the paternal uncle (*pitṛvya*) of Parameśvara I.[11] He suggests that this Śaṅkara is the author of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*: *ayam eva śrīmacchaṅkarapūjyapādaḥ pātañjalayogabhāṣyavivaraṇakartā-iti asmākam abhyūhaḥ*.[12] He adds the *sphoṭa* section of the Vivaraṇa (*i.e.* pages 167-178 of the 1952 edition) as an appendix to his edition of the *Sphoṭasiddhi*. This section quotes and refutes a sequence of verses from Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* which is also found in the *Sphoṭasiddhi*. The section of the *Gopālikā* by Parameśvara II which deals with these verses as presented by Maṇḍana may well have been written with a knowledge of the Vivaraṇa's treatment of this topic.[13] On the other hand, Parameśvara I is also credited with a commentary on Vācaspati's *Tattvabindu*, which criticizes the *sphoṭa* theory.[14]

Rāmanātha Śāstrī has not noticed that Parameśvara I actually gives a number of quotes from the Vivaraṇa in the introductory portion of his *Svaditaṅkaraṅī* where he deals with Vācaspati's benedictory verses.[15] No such Vivaraṇa quotes appear in the corresponding passages of the *Juṣadhvaṅkaraṅī*, Parameśvara's own

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earlier commentary on the *Nyāyakaṇikā*. The quotes in the *Svaditaṅkaraṇī* are highly conspicuous insofar as they constitute the earliest available references to this work which seems to have been largely unknown outside of Kerala until a transcript was made in 1918/19 and subsequently deposited in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library of Madras. This was again transcribed for the Adyar Library, from which Rāmanātha Śāstrī published in his excerpt.[16] Based upon the information currently accessible to us we may say that there is no conclusive evidence why the quotes in the *Svaditaṅkaraṇī* could not have been taken from a work by that same Śaṅkara whom Parameśvara himself presents as his teacher later in this text. This would imply that the Vivaraṇa is a product of the (possibly earlier) fourteenth century. On the other hand, there is nothing in the form or contents of the Vivaraṇa that would exclude the possibility that it is a work by the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. On the contrary, there are numerous affinities between the Vivaraṇa and Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*; these will be illustrated by our following observations. There is, of course, more than one explanation for such affinities; and they do certainly not constitute an adequate basis for Hacker's "conversion" thesis and for his assessment of the commentary on Gauḍapāda's Kārikās as a turning-point in Śaṅkara's development.

2. In general, quotes from or references to the Vivaraṇa are conspicuously absent where one would expect them if this were in fact a work by the great Śaṅkara of the period before or around A.D. 800, or if it had been widely known or recognized as such. It seems that there are no such references in the works of the greatest representative of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga renaissance, Vijñānabhikṣu, or of the great encyclopedic Vedāntins, Appayadīkṣita and Madhusūdhana Sarasvatī,[17] who would be likely candidates to utilize a source of this kind in their attempts to establish a concordance or alliance of Vedānta and Sāṅkhya-Yoga. It is at least equally conspicuous that Vācaspatimiśra (ninth or tenth century), a Yoga commentator as well as a commentator of Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and in general a man of comprehensive learning gives no indication whatsoever in his commentary *Tattvavaiśāradī* on Vyāsa's *Yogabhāsya* that he is aware of this supposedly older commentary on the same text. On the other hand, the Vivaraṇa does not show any acquaintance with the Vaiśāradī, which would be surprising if this were in fact, as Rāma-

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nātha Śāstrī suggests, a work written in the fourteenth century by the teacher of Parameśvara I; by this time, Vācaspati's reputation had obviously reached a high level in Kerala. The two commentaries differ considerably in character and orientation; and moreover, they are based upon versions of the *Yogabhāṣya* which are often not identical— a fact which was already noticed by the editors of the Vivaraṇa. In some cases, Vācaspati and the author of the *Vivaraṇa* have different readings of the *sūtra* text, II, 7 and II, 8 read *sukhānujanmā rāgaḥ* and *duḥkhānujanmā dveṣaḥ* in the Vivaraṇa instead of *sukhānuśayī rāgaḥ* and *duḥkhānuśayi dveṣeaḥ* respectively in the *Vaiśāradī*. But unlike Vācaspati, the author of the Vivaraṇa is aware that there are alternative readings in this case, and he mentions them explicitly.[18] It should, however, be noted that Vācaspati's *Yogabhāṣya* text itself, just like that of this *Tattvavaiśāradī*, is not always well established and that it is not necessarily identical with the text which is commonly and conventionally accepted in the modern printed editions.

The editors of the Vivaraṇa have listed many, but certainly not all significant *Yogabhāṣya* variants in the foot-notes of their edition; and their system of notation is not consistent. In numerous instances, they print the "standard" text of the *Yogabhāṣya* as supposedly commented upon by Vācaspati and cite (or fail to cite) conspicuous Vivaraṇa variants in the foot-notes; but even more frequently, this procedure is reversed. The variants seem to be more frequent and significant in such complex and intricate sections as the discussion on *dharma/dharmin* and the "three times" past, present and future (on III, 13-16). One example is the passage which reads *dharmānabhyadhiko dharmī* according to Vācaspati and the "standard" version, but *dharmābhyadhiko dharmī* according to the Vivaraṇa. In the interpretation of the Vivaraṇa this is a reference to the view that the substance is something and over above its constituents (*dharmavyatirika*), while according to Vācaspati it refers to the Buddhists.[19]

Very significant, at times crucial variants are found in the sections dealing with *karman* and rebirth, specifically on II, 13 and IV, 9. One of these important variants in the *Bhāṣya* on *sūtra* II, 13 has not been cited by the editors, although it is crucial with reference to the interpretation of the term *ekabhavika* and an adequate understanding of the mechanism of rebirth according to the *Yogabhāṣya*. In this case, the Vivaraṇa is based upon the reading *tatra-adṛṣṭajanmavedanīyasya niyatavipākasya-eva-*

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ayaṃ niyamo, while Vācaspati, as presented in the modern printed editions of the *Yogabhāṣya* and the Vaiśāradī, has *tatradṛṣṭajanmavedanīyasya*...; the reading of the Vivaraṇa which seems to be clearly preferable in the context of the *Yogabhāṣya*, is again found in the version of the *Yogavārttika* by Vijñānabhikṣu.[20] Other vairants in this section have been indicated by the editors, but they need not concern us here.[21] The *karman* sections of the fourth *pāda* specifically on IV, 9, also contain significant and characteristic variants. According to the Vivaraṇa, the introductory statement has *vṛṣadaṃśavipākādayaḥ. svakarmavyañjakāñjanāḥ* while Vācaspati reads: *vṛṣadaṁśavipākodayaḥ svavyañjakāñjanābhivyaktaḥ*. In the following, the Vivaraṇa has *yathā-anubhavās tathā saṃskārāḥ, te ca vāsanānurūpāḥ* instead of Vācaspati's...*te ca karmavāsanānurūpāḥ*. There can be no doubt that these Vivaraṇa readings, too, deserve careful consideration; they may, in fact, allow for a more coherent interpretation of the karmic mechanism than Vācaspati's text.[22]

However, a further discussion of these and related problems is beyond the scope of this inquiry. Our primary purpose is to draw attention to such sections which are thematically related to other chapters in this volume and which have not yet been explored in the previous studies of the Vivaraṇa. This may also help to illustrate the philosophical rank and character of this work — whoever its author may have been. Specifically, we shall refer to the following problems: the attitude toward Kumārila in the Vivaraṇa; the evaluation of sacrificial *hiṁsā*; the assessment of the role of reason and of sacred, in particular, Vedic texts; the argumentation against Buddhism and for the existence of an irreducible "witness" in this text, as compared to that in the *Brahmasūtra* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* commentaries.

3. It may seem surprising that the concrete evidence for Śaṅkara's acquaintance with the works of Kumārila is scarce;clearly identifiable references, if they exist at all, are very rare, as far as Śaṅkara's generally recognized works are concerned. However, the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* quotes and refutes Kumārila—without mentioning his name — extensively in a remarkable section on the *sphoṭa* theory.[23] First, it presents a sequence of verses from the *sphoṭa* chapter of the *Ślokavārttika*; this same sequence is also quoted and criticized in Maṇḍana's *Sphoṭasiddhi*.[24] Subsequently, it not only defends the *sphoṭa* theory against Kumārila's criticism, but also modifies and rephrases his verses in such a manner that they support the *sphoṭa* theory. The same section mentions the

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old Mīmāṁsā (and Vedānta) teacher Upavarṣa by name and adds a short quote, which is, however, already found in Śabara.[25] It is well known that there is a discussion of the *sphoṭa* theory in Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* which also contains a quote from and references to Upavarṣa. However, this quote is not identical with Śabara's quote; and in general, the treatment of the *sphoṭa* theory in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* is different from that in the Vivaraṇa.[26] In addition to the *sphoṭavāda* quotes, the Vivaraṇa also contains one shorter quote from the *vākya* chapter of the *Ślokavārttika*.[27]

Concerning the problem of bloody rituals, *i.e.* of sacrificial *hiṁsā*, the author of the Vivaraṇa appears as an advocate of basic tenets of classical Sāṅkhya and Yoga which are explictily criticized by Kumārila and which are equally incompatible with the views expressed in Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.[28] He states that Vedic rituals may indeed have an "ambiguous causality" (*ubhayahetutva*), i.e. produce demerit as well as merit, since they imply an element of harming (*pīḍā*). According to the Vivaraṇa, *hiṁsā* will produce bad *karman* even if it takes place "for the sake of sacrifice" (*kratvartha*): *kratvarthā-api satī hiṁsā-aniṣṭabhūtā-eva tadarthatām pratipadyate*.[29] The correlation of helping with *dharma* and of hurting with *adharma* applies in all cases: *punaśca tataḥ parānugrahaparapīḍanābhyāṁ dharmā-dharmau*.[30]

While in this respect the Vivaraṇa follows the basic attitude of the classical Sāṅkhya and Yoga texts, it is generally much more scripture-oriented than the *Yogabhāṣya* or even Vācaspati's *Tattvavaiśāradī*. Compared to these texts, it exhibits a conspicuous tendency to invoke the *Upaniṣads*, specifically the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, as well as the *Bhagavadgītā*. The distribution of Vedic quotes is somewhat uneven. While there are long portions without Vedic quotes or references, they appear in unusual concentration in such sections as the lengthy discussion on the existence of the "Lord" (*Īśvara*; on *sūtra* I, 25 ff.).

Although Vyāsa's *Yogabhāṣya* does contain several references to Upaniṣadic statements,[31] it never invokes the *Upaniṣads* explicitly as sources of authority or validation; it does not dwell upon the problem of the authority of the *Veda*, nor does it seem concerned about avoiding conflicts with the Vedic revelation. Vācaspati invokes the *Upaniṣads* occasionally, specifically the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* which is traditionally associated with Sāṅkhya and

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Yoga.[32] He does not show the Vivaraṇa's predilection for the *Bṛhadāraṇyka* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, which are, of course, Śaṅkara's favourite *Upaniṣads*. In general, scriptural references are much less conspicuous and significant in the *Tattvavaiśāradī* than in the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*.[33]

In addition to its Upaniṣadic references, the Vivaraṇa also presents some theoretical considerations concerning the authority and the metaphysical status of the sacred texts, or more specifically, its dependence on, and inherence in, the omniscience and pure "goodness" (*sattva*) of the "Lord". Although this proceeds from commentarial observations, it goes far beyond the explicit statements of Vyāsa's *Bhāṣya*.[34] In general, the Vivaraṇa seems to associate the terms *śāstra* and *āgama* more closely with the *Veda*, specifically the *Upaniṣads*, than the *Bhāṣya* does, it paraphrases, e.g., Vyāsa's expression *mokṣaśāstrādhyayana* as *upaniṣadādyadhyayana*.[35] The discussion of *karman* and rebirth is much more scripture-oriented in the Vivaraṇa than in the *Bhāṣya*; there is a conspicuous concern that there should be no conflict with *śruti* and *smṛti* and that these matters should be explicated in such a manner that there is no "infuriation of all sacred texts" (*sarvaśāstraviprakopa*) and, moreover, no "uselessness of the texts on ritual works" (*karmaśāstrānarthakya*).[36] In general, the Vivaraṇa is less susceptible than the *Bhāṣya* to the kind of criticism which Śaṅkara raises against Sāṅkhya and Yoga in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* II, 1, 1 ff. On the other hand, there is no such attempt to distinguish the absolute, self-sufficient authority of the *Veda* from the conditional, limited authority of the *smṛti* texts as we find it in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*,[37] and the authoritative Yoga texts, etc., are listed side by side with the *Veda* itself.[38]

The Vivaraṇa also argues in terms of a concordance of reasoning or inference (*anumāna*) and authoritative texts (*āgama*.[39] Concerning the exegesis of the sacred texts, it employs the Mīmāṃsā concepts of *vidhi*, *pratiṣedha*, *stuti/arthavāda*, etc.; but it rejects, in a manner which is clearly reminiscent of what we find in various passages in Śaṅkara's "classical" works.[40] the Mīmāṁsā attempt to reduce scriptural statements concerning the existence of the "Lord" to merely auxiliary statements, "praises" (*stuti*), supplements to instructions on ritual performances or to "meditational injunctions" (*upāsanāvidhi*).[41] Still in the context of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, and without identifying meditational activities as "works" (*karman*), the Vivaraṇa advocates "knowledge" (*jñāna*),

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which it identifies with "detachment" (*vairāgya*) and which it contrasts with "works"; and it associates final liberation with knowledge alone.[42]

4. Among the most remarkable features of the Vivaraṇa is its vigorous and elaborate criticism of Buddhism, specifically of Vijñānavāda. While the *Yogabhāṣya* contains some critical references to the Buddhist theories of "consciousness only," momentariness, etc., it does not present any broad and comprehensive criticism of Buddhist thought, and, in general, it remains open and indebted to Buddhist influences.[43] Here again, the so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* shows an obvious affinity with what we know from Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

The status of the Buddha as a teacher and the problems resulting from the plurality of Buddhas are discussed in the context of the long chapter on the "Lord" (*īśvara*), which is one of the most conspicuous sections of the whole work.[44] Buddhist concepts and doctrines — the identification of the mind with its ideas, the denial of a subject or witness of experience, the theory of momentariness, the Vijñānavāda denial of material things, problems concerning the relationship between ideas and objects — are then discussed in the commentary on *sūtra* I, 32 and in several subsequent sections, specifically in the fourth *pāda*.[45]

The section on I, 32 focuses on the necessity of an identical, unifying subject of awareness, in order to account for the possibility of mental discipline and concentration as well as for the facts of daily life and experience. The subject cannot simply coincide with a "stream" of momentary data of awareness, with mere consciousness understood as a continuous flux.[46]

As stated earlier, the author of the Vivaraṇa argues specifically against the Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda school of Buddhism. On *sūtra* IV, 14, the Vijñānavāda arguments for the non-existence of the material world and the exclusive existence of consciousness are presented, including the dream argument and the "rule of co-apprehension" (*sahopalambhaniyama*), the term "*sahopalambhaniyama*" which Śaṅkara uses in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, apparently after becoming aware of Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, does not occur in this passage.[47]

Explicating Vyāsa's formulation *na-asty artho vijñānavisahacaraḥ* the Vivaraṇa states the Vijñānavāda position as follows: *tasmād artho vijñānavyatirekeṇa na-asti-iti pratijānīmahe. pramāṇam apy*

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atra bhavati — vijñānavyatirekeṇa na-asti grāhyaṁ vastu, vijñānavyatirekeṇa-anupalabhyamānatvāt vijñānasvarūpavat.[48] Against this, the Vivaraṇa, first presents a soteriological *prasaṅga*. If being an object of awareness (*upalabhyamānatva*) coincides with mere appearance, *i.e.* with illusory existence, then awareness itself, since it is also an object of apprehension, would be unreal; and there would be no subject of awareness. Whose would be liberation? How could there be separation from anything? How would bondage and liberation be possible?[49] Various other arguments follow, which seem to be worth mentioning: The thesis that there is no object apart from consciousness is simply contradicted by perception. Consciousness is perceiving, *i.e.* illuminating (*avabhāsaka*); the object has to be illuminated (*avabhāsanīya*). These are essentially different attributes, which cannot belong to one and the same substratum. Object and cognition are being "grasped", *i.e.* understood, as essentially different, and there can be no suspicion of inseparability; the reason claimed by the Vijñānavādin is invalid.[50]

The Vijñānavādin refutes himself when he argues against others: How can he deny the existence of him against whom he tries to establish his position? If, however, the opponent exists as distinct from the Vijñānavādin's consciousness, then the existence of pots etc. is also established.[51] Moreover, followers of this doctrine could not legitimately converse with one another, by instructing disciples, etc.;[52] and, in general, the whole realm of daily activities (*vyavahāra*) could not be accounted for by this and similar views; a "breakdown of *vyavahāra*" (*vyavahāravilopa*) would result.[53]

Even in dreams, consciousness is not really without extramental support, since it relates to objects which *have been* perceived: *svapnajñānam api upalabdhārthaviṣayatvāt na nirālambanam.*[54] This is a point which is already emphasized in the *nirālambanavāda* section of Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika.*[55] In general, the anti-Buddhist argumentation in the Vivaraṇa is obviously indebted to Kumārila; yet, it can by no means be reduced to what is already found in the *Śloka-vārttika*, and it remains characteristically different in style and substance.

The author of the Vivaraṇa supplements his arguments against Vijñānavāda with others, which apply also to similar and affiliated standpoints, specifically the theory that, though objects may have an existence apart from consciousness, they arise and

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disappear simultaneously with acts of awareness, since whatever exists must have a relation to experience:... *evaṁ ghaṭādir artho'pi vijñānasamāna-samayajanmavināśa eva bhogyatvāt iti.*[56] Here, no less than in the case of strict Vijñānavāda, the author of the Vivaraṇa sees a denial of the "commonness" (*sādhāraṇatva*) of objects, *i.e.* their accessibility to different subjects, and moreover, the loss of their identity and continuity in the temporality of one's own consciousness. In general, we find here a sharp critical sense of problems concerning the temporal constitution of acts and contents of awareness. In the context of past, present and future, where past phenomena may be objects of present acts of awareness, etc., the object cannot just coincide, or be strictly synchronous, with the apprehending of intending act: *tasmāt idānīntano'rtho na-idānīntanajñānasahabhūr eva-iti, grāhyatvāt, atītārthavat, atīto vā na-atītajñānasahanāśajanmā grāhyatvāt, idānīntanārthavat bhūtabhaviṣyajñānagrāhyā arthā adhunā-api santi grāhyatvāt adhunātanapratyayagrāhyavat idānīntanamapi vastu pūrvottarakṣaṇeṣu tathā-eva.*[57]

5. Enlarging upon a remark made in the *Yogabhāṣya*, the Vivaraṇa presents the Vijñānavādins as deserving compassion, since their minds are subject to a basic kārmic defect. The materialists and Śūnyavādins, on the other hand, do not deserve such compassion, since they are only bent upon deceiving people: *kevalajagadvañcanārthapravṛttatvāt tu na-eteṣv anukampā kartavyā.*[58] According to the Vivaraṇa, the Vaiśeṣikas and others are also subject to a fundamental confusion, insofar as they see consciousness (*caitanya*) as a mere attribute of the self, to be eliminated in the state of release. But unlike the Buddhist "destructionists," they accept at least a stable, identical subject or substratum: *vaināśikebhyas tv ayaṁ viśeṣaḥ-sthiram ekaṁ dharmiṇam icchanti-iti.*[59]

Whatever the specific target of argumentation or criticism may be, the Vivaraṇa tries to establish the identity and distinctness of the conscious, "witnessing" self (*puruṣa, ātman*) against everything which is merely "visible" (*dṛśya*), and occurs as objective content (*pratyaya*) of awareness; the illuminator (*prakāśaka*) has to be distinguished from what is to be illuminated (*prakāśya*), the perceiver (*grāhaka*) from the perceived or perceivable (*grāhya*). This is obviously in accordance with the Sāṅkhya-Yoga dualism of *puruṣa* and *pradhāna*,[60] where the objective "nature" (*pradhāna* or *prakṛti*) includes the objectifiable processes of the mental sphere (*citta*). But the Vivaraṇa goes beyond what one would expect in a Yoga text, and the style of argumentation is again reminiscent

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of what we find in Śaṅkara's "classical" works, such as the anti-Buddhist passages in the commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. On the other hand, dualistic implications are not always avoided in these "classical" texts, where the distinctness and internal unity of the *ātman* often seems to be a more serious and direct concern than the ultimate non-duality of all reality.

Among the relevant peculiarities of the Vivaraṇa argumentation, we may mention, *e.g.*, its references to the metaphor of the lamp (*pradīpa*) and its constant and conspicuous usage of the terms *vyatireka* and *vyatirikta*, as occurring in such compounds as *vijñānavyatireka*, *cittavyatirikta*, *vyatiriktagrāhyatva*, *viṣayavyatirikta*, *vyatiriktapuruṣa*, *vyatiriktadṛśyatva*.[61] Some of this refers to the separability of external objects from actual empirical awareness; but in most cases, it is the distinctness and absoluteness of the witnessing self which is at stake. There is no exception to the rule that whatever is "given" or perceived, must be given to, perceived by a distinct, non-objectifiable subject or witness: *na tu vyatiriktagrāhyatvṁ vyabhicarati*...[62] While physical objects may exist without "empirical" acts or states of consciousness, *i.e.*, without the *vijñāna* of Vijñānavāda or the *citta* of Yoga, neither physical objects nor acts of consciousness, mental states or "perceptions" (*pratyaya*),[63] can be "graspable" or "visible" (*grāhya*, *dṛśya*) without a separate witnessing subject.

Already in the second *pāda*, we find a remarkable attempt to infer the existence of an irreducible "seer" or "witness" from the "visibility" (*dṛśyatva*) of whatever can be "seen"; it is based upon the premise that whatever appears as an objectifiable datum can do so only by reflecting a "light" which is not its own. The relationship between objects and sources of manifestation is pursued through different stages up to the ultimate source of light and awareness, the *puruṣa* or *ātman*. Visible external objects, such as pots etc., as well as the "lights" (*āloka*) which illumine these objects, and the "perceptions" (*pratyaya*) which in turn illumine, *i.e.* let appear in cognition, these lights and all other objects — all this requires, in order to be "visible", visibility for and manifestation by an essentially different principle: *etat tu tadastitvānumānaṁ katham? ghaṭādīnāṁ dṛśyānāṁ svarūpavyatiriktena-anyena dṛśyatvadarśanāt. tatprakāśakānāṁ ca-ālokānāṁ vyatiriktadṛśyatvāt, sarvārthāvabhāsakānām api pratyayānāṃ svarūpavyatiriktadṛśyatvam avagamyate ghaṭāditadālokādivad iti*.[64] The basic conditions of "visibility" or

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objectivity are the same in the case of external objects like pots and "inner" data, *i.e.* perceptions; external objects are valid inferential "examples" for the latter.

This "proof" for the existence of a witnessing subject is certainly not meant to disprove or question the existence of the objects. What is denied to the objects is not their independent existence, but their independent manifestness. However, this hierarchy of objects and factors of manifestation has also ontological connotations. The objects of manifestation may change; the "lower" levels of manifestation may turn out to be dependent on higher manifestors. What is indispensable, irreducible and constantly present in this structure of appearance is the witness. The witness or spirit (*puruṣa*) is unchanging (*apariṇāmin*) and does not "deviate" from any given content of awareness. The contents may change; the *puruṣa* does not, and this establishes his separate existence: *tadavyabhicāreṇa-eva puruṣasya vyatiriktatvasiddhiḥ*.[65]

There is an obvious connection with the *anvayavyatireka* "method" introduced in the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, although the term itself is not used in this context.[66] Even more significant is the affinity with Śaṅkara's interpretation of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 3, 1 ff., which describes the successive elimination of "lights" up to the ultimate source of light and witnesshood, the pure *ātman*.[67] And it is Śaṅkara's commentary on this passage (specifically on IV, 3, 7) where we find some of the most striking correspondences to the argumentation of the Vivaraṇa. We referred earlier to the following statement in the Vivaraṇa: *na tu vyatiriktagrāhyatvaṁ vyabhicarati, pradīpayor dṛśyatvād ghaṭādivat, etena vyatiriktagrāhyatvaṁ-jñānasya dṛśyatvāt pradīpādivat siddhaṁ bhavati*.[68] On the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 3, 7, Śaṅkara says: *yady api pradīpo'nyasya-avabhāsakaḥ svayamavabhāsātmakatvāt tathā-api vyatiriktacaitanyāvabhāsyatvaṁ na vyabhicarati, ghaṭādivad eva. yadā cā-evaṁ, tadā vyatiriktāvabhāsyatvaṁ tāvad avaśyambhāvi*.[69]

There are remarkable analogies also in the manner in which common sense and daily life (*vyavahāra*) are invoked against Vijñānavāda, which is depicted as entailing a "breakdown of *vyavahāra*." The Vivaraṇa uses the expression *vyavahāravilopa*, the commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, *sarvasaṁvyavahāralopa*; and both refer specifically to the impossibility of accounting for the activities of debate etc. in terms of the "consciousness-only" theory.[70] The readiness to rely on common sense and *vyavahāra*

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is, of course, also a striking feature of Śaṅkara's argumentation against Vijñānavāda in his *Brahmasūtra* commentary (II, 2, 28 ff.).

6. All this is conspicuously different from the treatment of Vijñānavāda and Buddhism in general in the commentary on Gauḍapāda's *Karikās* (specifically IV, 24ff.), and it throws suspicion on Hacker's assessment of this work as a transitional work between the *Yogasūtra-bhāṣyavivaraṇa* and Śaṅkara's "mature" works, such as his commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. In several significant respects, the Vivaraṇa is closer to these works than the commentary on Gauḍapāda; but as noted before, such affinities are open to different interpretations.

Both P. Hacker and T. Vetter suggest that in the course of his development Śaṅkara turned away from an early indebtedness to Buddhist ideas. Vetter states that Śaṅkara's anti-Buddhist polemics in his *Brahmasūtra* commentary might be an attempt to disassociate himself from something he himself wrote earlier, sc. in his commentary on Gauḍapāda.[71] Hacker maintains that, in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Śaṅkara turned against a "Buddhist" theory which he had previously accepted *i.e.* the theory of the apparent disintegration of pure consciousness into subject and object.[72] But against this view, the argumentation is just as vigorous in the Vivaraṇa as it is in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* commentary. In a recent article, F. Whaling claims that "Hacker has shown by literary analysis" that in his early days Śaṅkara was "much closer to Buddhism than he was later when he wrote the commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras."[73] Trying to further elaborate Hacker's thesis, Whaling speculates on an "early Vijñānavāda phase" in Śaṅkara's thought, and he finds a "Buddhist Gauḍapāda phase" in his "commentaries on the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and Kārikās, his commentary on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, and parts of the Upadeśasāhasrī, and also possibly in his commentary on Vyāsa's commentary on the Yoga-sūtras."[74] Whaling has obviously not paid any attention to to the anti-Buddhist passages of the Vivaraṇa, and his statements are definitely less cautious than those of Hacker and Vetter.

There is nothing in the Vivaraṇa passages under discussion which would exclude Śaṅkara's authorship; as we have seen, they correspond to and supplement what we find also in his "mature", "classical" works. Of course, there are also statements in the Vivaraṇa which would not be acceptable in the context of these

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works. Basic teachings of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, which are expressly rejected in Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta works, are simply taken for granted in the Vivaraṇa, *e.g.* the existence of "primal matter" (*pradhāna*) and the plurality of "selves" or "spirits" (*puruṣa*). However, the Vivaraṇa does not give any prominence to Sāṅkhya and Yoga teachings which are incompatible with Advaita Vedānta. Apart from strictly commentarial statements,[75] "primal matter" and the plurality of selves do not play a significant role.

Other themes lead the author of the Vivaraṇa to long digressions and far beyond the text on which he comments: for instance problems of awareness; the search for the pure, irreducible subject or witness; the critique of Buddhist teachings; the existence of a supreme, omniscient "Lord" (*īśvara*). Moreover, the tendency to rely on the *Upaniṣads* and a conspicuous allegiance to the Vedic tradition are peculiar and untypical features of this "Yoga" text. Whether it is by Śaṅkara or not — there is lively, intellectually stimulating argumentation in the Vivaraṇa, and its author demonstrates a remarkable level of philosophical reflection and considerable dialectical skills [76] In particular, there is nothing stereotypical or scholastic in the argumentation against Buddhism, although there is, of course, some misunderstanding or misrepresentation of specific Buddhist teachings. Buddhism is taken as a fresh, living challenge to be dealt with in direct and problem-oriented argumentation. The Vivaraṇa does not attempt an explicit coordination or reconciliation of "reason" and revelation"; nor does it try to find "reason" in "revelation". But rational argumentation and reliance on authoritative, specifically Vedic instruction often appear side by side and in factual coordination or combination.[77]

All this would indicate a remarkable degree of "originality" if it were certain that the Vivaraṇa is by the young and developing Śaṅkara himself and not by a much later author who would be indebted to and borrowing from the works of the "mature" Śaṅkara.

7. It has not been the purpose of this presentation to solve the problem of the authorship of the so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* or to refute Hacker's hypothetical reconstruction of Śaṅkara's development. However, a few final considerations concerning this matter seem appropriate. As noted earlier, Hacker's authenticity thesis is — apart from more general and obviously inconclusive observations concerning Śaṅkara's familiarity with

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Yoga teachings — primarily based upon the fact that the colophons present Śaṅkarabhagavat and not Śaṅkarācārya as the author of the Vivaraṇa. Hacker himself recognizes that this alone is not a sufficient criterion of authenticity.[78] It is furthermore evident that his stimulating investigations have to be supplemented by a broader sampling of texts and manuscripts, which may be based upon numerous new manuscript catalogues which were not available to him. Among the cases not considered by Hacker is the commentary, *Jayamaṅgalā* on Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṅkhyakārikā*. According to the colophons, this is also by Śaṅkarabhagavat, and just as the Vivaraṇa, it was preserved, and probably composed in Kerala.[79] Readers of this work will hardly feel tempted to attribute it to the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* or, on the other hand, to the author of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* [80] In Kerala, the name Śaṅkara has apparently been more common than elsewhere.[81] One might suspect that, if there was a confusion of authors, it was not so much a matter of confusing the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* with the institutionalized Śaṅkarācāryas, but rather with other authors whose name was Śaṅkara. Several "Yoga" works, *e.g.* the *Yogatārāvalī*,[82] are, of course, traditionally ascribed to "Śaṅkarācārya".

It seems obvious that the Vivaraṇa had a special and possibly unique relationship with Kerala; it is here where the text was preserved and, at least to a certain extent, studied. Even if the Vivaraṇa should be by the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* — it would still be true that it did not have any significant impact outside Kerala; and this would obviously constitute a conspicuous and probably exceptional case among the writings of the great Śaṅkara. May we accept the Indian tradition that Śaṅkara came from Kerala, and may we speculate that the Vivaraṇa, a youthful work of his,[83] found a certain recognition only in his homeland, while the fame of his other works spread all over India?

A merely regional impact would, however, be more normal for a work produced by a member or affiliate of the Payyūr family, such as Śaṅkara, the teacher and possibly uncle of Parameśvara I. In this case, it would also be unnecessary to dismiss the final verse of the text, which pays respect to the "venerable original Śaṅkara", as an addition made by a scribe or eager disciple.[84] If the author of the Vivaraṇa was not identical with the author of the commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, he was certainly familiar with these works and indebted

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to their author. In general, medieval Kerala was rich in local and somewhat parochial traditions of learning, which remained virtually unknown in the rest of India. The extaordinary contributions to mathematics and astronomy in medieval Kerala, which had no impact upon the development of these sciences in other parts of India, illustrate this insularity.[85] In Mīmāṁsā and other branches of traditional learning and literature, the members and affiliates of the Payyūr family made significant contributions which remained unknown outside of Kerala.[86]

Yet, the assignment of the Vivaraṇa to such a late date as the fourteenth century is far from being satisfactory. The style of the argumentation against Buddhism, the fact that Kumārila is the latest author explicitly referred to, and, more specifically, the absence of any identifiable reference to Vācaspatimiśra could easily be invoked as arguments for an earlier date.[87] How much earlier? Are there criteria which would allow us to come to a definitive chronological conclusion, even if we cannot resolve the authorship problem?

8. In a recent study of the Vivaraṇa, which contains numerous significant philological observations and which has already been referred to, A. Wezler agrees that the question of the authorship of the Vivaraṇa or, more specifically, the question whether its author is identical with the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, has to remain unanswered for the time being.[88] But he argues that it can nevertheless be determined that the Vivaraṇa must be considerably older than Vācaspati's *Tattvavaiśāradī*. In his view, "the text of the Bhāṣya as known to Vācaspatimiśra shows clear vestiges of an influence exercised on it by the Vivaraṇa."[89] In support of his thesis, Wezler cites several variant readings in the *Yogabhāṣya* texts on *sūtra* I, 5 and II, 32. According to Wezler, the statement *kliṣṭapravāhapatitā apy akliṣṭāḥ* in the section on I, 5 was added to the *Yogabhāṣya* text under the influence of the Vivaraṇa's explication of the section. In Wezler's view it is not only the fact that the Vivaraṇa does not cite this statement, but also the context of the *Yogabhāṣya* itself which suggests its spuriousness. He finds its contents but repeated by the following phrase, *viz.* "*kliṣṭacchidreṣv apy akliṣṭā bhavanti*," and he sees a "striking discrepancy as regards the image, *i.e. pravāha* (*patita*) on the one hand and *chidra* on the other, that can hardly be accounted for convincingly."[90] But the idea and imagery of a "gap in a series" or "succession" of (temporal) phenomena, or of an interruption in

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the "flow" of menalt modes, is certainly not unnatural in the context of classical Yoga thought. The conjunction of *chidra* and *pravāha* appears again in the *Bhāṣya* on *sūtra* IV, 27, which introduces the word *chidra*.[91] The issue of redundancy is more serious. But the statement starting with *kliṣṭacchidreṣu* is certainly not merely repetitious; it explains and justifies what has been said before in a more general sense. It would, however, not be repetitious at all if — in accordance with a possibility considered by Wezler himself — the preceding sentence could be read as implying a question or objection. If the author of the Vivaraṇa, unlike Vācaspati and other commentators, should have taken it in this sense, his following *tasmād āha* would be less problematic insofar as it could be understood as introducing Vyāsa's response to this question or objection, which the Vivaraṇa has paraphrased in detail although without quoting the exact wording in which it was presented in the *Bhāṣya*.[92] In general, it is evidently impossible to reconstruct a complete text of the *Yogabhāṣya* from the Vivaraṇa, which does not always quote the text on which it comments in its entirety.

It may certainly be granted that the phrase *kliṣṭapravāhapatitā* together with the Vivaraṇa's failure to cite it, raises legitimate questions; and the idea of a later introduction may indeed "suggest itself".[93] Yet, this alone is not enough for a strong and compelling argument; further evidence, at least of a cumulative type is called for. Is this provided by the variants in *Yogabhāṣya* II, 32?

Concerning this section, Wezler argues that Vācaspati's reading *mṛjjalādijanitam* instead of the Vivaraṇa's *mṛdādijanitam* originated under the influence of the explanation of the *ādi* given by the Vivaraṇa, *i.e.* the phrase *ādiśabdād udakaṃ ca* and that "similarly" the "irritating plural" *abhyavaharaṇāni* was "eliminated, *i.e.* replaced by" *abhyavaharaṇādi* in Vācaspati's version. But without further evidence, can we really say more than that *abhyavaharaṇāni* is the *lectio difficilior* which may or may not be the correct one? Finally, the combined reference to "earth" and "water" is very common, if not stereotypical in texts dealing with purity;[94] and water is the most familiar of all purifying substances. There is obviously no compelling reason why the *mṛjjala* in Vācaspati's version should reflect any specific influence of the Vivaraṇa. Vācaspati himself uses the compound *mṛjjalādikṣālana* in his commentary on *Yogabhāṣya* II, 5. In general, enumerative compounds

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with *ādi* are, of course, very susceptible to variants, which may result from omissions as well as from additions.[95]

As we have stated earlier, there is a large number of significant cases where Vācaspati's reading and interpretation of the *Yogabhāṣya* are clearly incompatible with that of the Vivaraṇa. How do the instances of an alleged influence relate to the numerous incompatibilities? Why did Vācaspati, if he had a *Bhāṣya* text influenced by the Vivaraṇa, follow this text in some cases, but disregard it in numerous other and apparently more significant cases? What exactly did he have — a *Yogabhāṣya* text which showed only occasional traces of the Vivaraṇa's interpretation, or one which was consistently shaped by it? Or did he have the *Yogabhāṣya* together with and embedded in the Vivaraṇa?[96] Whatever the answer to these hypothetical questions may be, it remains undeniable that there is no coherent pattern in the *Yogabhāṣya* variants which would support the thesis of a general influence of the Vivaraṇa upon Vācaspati's or the "standard" version of the *Yogabhāṣya*. Much further study of the textual tradition or traditions, of possible regional varieties, of versions other than the Vaiśāradī version is needed before definite conclusions concerning the relative chronology of the Vivaraṇa and the Vaiśāradī and the role of the Vivaraṇa in the textual tradition of the *Yogabhāṣya* can be drawn. Borrowing a phrase from Wezler's as sessment of Hacker's authorship thesis, we may say that so far the available evidence is not sufficient to turn "possibility into certaity."[97]

Nevertheless, we may readily agree with Wezler's observation that the *Yogabhāṣya* text as found in the Vivaraṇa is in many instances better than Vācaspati's version; and it may indeed have preserved a significant number of older readings. And in general, it is undeniable that Wezler's philological investigations have opened promising prospects for future research, which would not only affect our understanding of the Vivaraṇa, but also of the Yogabhāṣya itself.

For the time being, the so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* remains a puzzle. Basic questions concerning its philological status, its historical role and its philosophical position are still open. Hacker's challenging and intriguing hypothesis that Śaṅkara, the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, wrote this text as a Yogin and before "converting" to Advaita Vedānta is just this: a hypothesis, one possibility among others.[98] In order to arrive at a definitive solution of the authorship problem, we may have to wait for a

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fortunate textual discovery. In the absence of this, the only way to approach the problem seems to be the continuation of that type of patient and thorough philological work for which the recent studies by A. Wezler provide a model.[99] And even if such investigations may not reveal the identity of the author of the Vivaraṇa, they will certainly contribute to a better understanding of its place in the history of Indian thought.

9. As a postcript to the preceding observations, we may now briefly comment on the question how the Yoga system is treated in those writings which are generally accepted as Śaṅkara's genuine works, *i.e.* above all in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. Regardless of the authorship of the so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*, we may still ask what kind of transition (or, according to Hacker, "conversion") would have been involved if the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* had, indeed, first produced a commentary on the *Yogaśāstra*. In doing so, we may also consider H. Nakamura's suggestion that even if these works had one and the same author, he could have combined and reconciled them without undergoing any "conversion" or change of allegiance.[100]

In approaching our topic, we have to distinguish between Śaṅkara's evaluation and critique of the theoretical, metaphysical teachings of Patañjali's Yoga, on the one hand, and his attitude towards Yogic practices (as well as other meditational techniques), on the other hand. As far as its metaphysical basis is concerned, classical Yoga is inseparable from the Sāṅkhya system. Accordingly, and following the lead of *Brahmasūtra* II, i, 3,[101] Śaṅkara presents his critique of Yoga metaphysics as an extension of his critique of Sāṅkhya, or as being implied in it. How does he deal with Sāṅkhya?

Our most important source for Śaṅkara's understanding and critique of Sāṅkhya is his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, specifically the following sections: I, 1, 5-11 (and 18); I, 4, 1-28; II, 1, 1-11; II, 2, 1-10. These sections may be supplemented by more casual statements in other parts of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, as well as in other works, such as the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣya*, the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, and the *Gītābhāṣya*.

In the first *adhyāya* of this *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, Śaṅkara tries to establish that Brahman is the one ultimate subject of all Vedic texts, and that this Brahman is the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent cause of a world which has no true reality of its own. In contrast with this view, the Sāṅkhya school asserts that a non-

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manifest and unconscious "nature" or "matter" (*pradhāna*, *prakṛti*) is the ultimate cause of the manifest universe, and that this concept of *pradhāna* has the support of the *Veda*. Śaṅkara argues against this claim (and against the concomitant theory that there are many "spirits", *puruṣa*) in considerable detail; he tries to demonstrate that it is entirely incompatible with the *Upaniṣads*, and that the true meaning of those Vedic passages which have been invoked by Sāṅkhya teachers is Brahman, not *pradhāna*.[102]

Furthermore, Sāṅkhya claims that its views have the additional independent and extra-Vedic support of reasoning (*tarka*) and tradition (*smṛti*). Against this, Śaṅkara argues that wherever there is conflict between *śruti* and *smṛti*, "revelation" takes precedence over "tradition", and that no human reasoning as well as experience has any independent metaphysical or soteriological validity apart from the authority of the Veda.[103] Sāṅkhya and Yoga themselves are nothing but "traditions" (*smṛti*); their teachings have to be measured against the standard of *śruti*, and if necessary, they have to be corrected or discarded.[104] But even without considering their compatibility or incompatibility with the *Veda*, the Sāṅkhya (and Yoga) theories can, according to Śaṅkara, be shown to be inconsistent within themselves; accordingly, he concludes his argumentation with an "autonomous" (*svatantra*) "rational refutation" (*yuktipratiṣedha*) of these theories.[105]

All this does not mean that Sāṅkhya and Yoga have to be discarded in their entirety: "We willingly allow room for those portions of the two systems which do not contradict the *Veda*..."[106] But no compromise is possible when it comes to the Sāṅkhya theory of *pradhāna*, the "plurality of spirits" (*puruṣabahutva*), or the derivation of "cognition" (*buddhi*), etc. from the unconscious *pradhāna*. Such ideas are incompatible with the Advaitic message of the *Veda*, and they postulate, moreover, an authority and sovereignty of human knowledge which Śaṅkara finds entirely unacceptable. The followers of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, who advocate these ideas, remain committed to the illusion of plurality; and they fail to recognize the unity of the self: *dvaitino hi te sāṅkhyā yogāśca naātmaikatvadarśinaḥ*.[107]

10. Śaṅkara's treatment of Yogic practice, and of meditational techniques in general, is more ambiguous than his assessment of Sāṅkhya-Yoga metaphysics. To be sure, there is no independent "Yogic path" towards final liberation; only pure knowledge, as revealed by the *Veda*, can bring about liberation.

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"Works" (*karman*) and techniques, even Yogic or similar "mental acts" (*mānasī kriyā*), cannot lead to this goal. Yet, they can pave the way for the occurrence of liberating knowledge. They have an important preparatory and provisional function within the context of the "two truths". Their significance for the elusive ascent from the "lower", empirical realm towards the ultimate, absolute truth of non-dualism is undeniable and legitimate.[108]

In a broad sense, Yogic practice is simply part of Śaṅkara's world. He accepts the "greatness of Yoga" (*yogamāhātmya*)[109] insofar as its potential for extraordinary, even superhuman powers and accomplishments is concerned. He believes that the *Veda* itself authorizes and encourages acts of inner discipline, the focusing of the mind (*upāsana*), etc.[110] Most specifically, he advocates the maditative concentration on the sacred syllable *om* as a Vedic method of preparing oneself for liberating knowledge. Such meditation is most significant and beneficial for persons of slower understanding.[111] The "method of meditation" (*dhyānayoga*) is inherently conducive to perfect, liberating insight (... *samyagdarśanasya-antaraṅgam*).[112] It has great therapeutic significance for those who try to overcome their "afflictions" (*kleśa*), such as passion and hate (*rāga, dveṣa*), as well as other obstacles on the way to liberating knowledge. Śaṅkara obviously shares a deep therapeutic concern with the Yoga. However, P. Hacker has drawn unwarranted conclusions for this common therapeutic dimension in his argumentation concerning the authorship of the so-called *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*.[113]

Yet, even with regard to Yoga practice as such, Śaṅkara is ultimately obliged to disassociate himself from it. Regardless of its doctrinal ties with the dualistic Sāṅkhya system, Yoga practice itself, in its methodic performance of "mental acts", its application of certain techniques of self-control in order to reach the soteriological goal, involves an inherent dualism, *i.e*, the dualism of means and ends, of the goal and the seeker, and of actions and results.

Śaṅkara's treatment of Yoga practice is not so much an extension of his critique of Sāṅkhya, but an expression and application of his general attitude toward "works" (*karman*), and more specifically, of his rejection of the "work orientation" of the Pūrvamīmāṁsā. The "mental acts" (*mānasī kriyā*) which constitute Yogic meditation are not physical activities motivated by personal desires, and they are not rituals in a literal sense. They are

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nevertheless "works" which are oriented towards results. They are part of that network of means and ends which keeps us in *saṁsāra*. Bondage itself is of the nature of means and end: *sādhya-sādhana-lakṣaṇo bhandhaḥ*.[114] Final liberation, which coincides with the pure identity of the self (*śvātmasvarūpatva*), is nothing to be attained (*āpya*) or produced (*utpādyā*); it cannot be contingent upon mental (*mānasa*), vocal (*vācika*) or physical (*kāyika*) acts and duties.[115]

In performing acts of meditation and concentration (*upāsana*), one does not transcend that status of being an agent (*kartṛtva*) which is an ingredient of *saṁsāra* itself. The teaching that the absolute Brahman is the Ātman presupposes such transcendence (*kartṛtvādisarvasaṁsāradharma-nirākaraṇe hi brahmaṇa ātmatvopadeśaḥ*), while directives to perform meditative acts apply only as long as it has *not* taken place (*tadanirākaraṇena ca-upāsanvaidhānaḥ*).[116] Yogic meditation as such is incapable of transcending or superseding its own underlying premises. Śaṅkara states explicitly that the "calming of the fluctuations of the mind (*cittavṛttinirodha*) which *Yogasūtra* I,2 presents as the very essence of Yoga cannot be considered as a means (*sādhana*) to achieve final liberation (*mokṣa*).[117] He refers specifically to a mental and intellectual exercise known as *prasaṅkhyāna* which according to classical Yoga attenuates and removes the "afflictions" (*kleśa*) and finally brings about "metaphysical discrimination" (*vivekakhyāti*).[118] It appears that this method was adopted and perhaps reinterpreted by certain Vedāntins who employed it as a technique to realize the meaning of the Upaniṣadic "great saying" (*mahāvākya*).[119] Śaṅkara's critique of *prasaṅkhyāna* focuses on its implication of methodic repetition and accumulation (*abhyāsa*) and mental effort and performance (*ceṣṭita*).[120] According to his faithful disciple Sureśvara, no such mental exercise and repetition (*āmreḍana*, etc.) can lead to that "knowledge" which is the pure presence of reality itself.[121]

11. In spite of their great and indispensable role at the earlier stages of development, Yoga practices and techniques may even turn into obstacles if the seeker becomes attached to their pursuit and believes that such "result-oriented", inherently dualistic and saṁsāric activities can bring about final liberation. Śaṅkara shows little appreciation of the fact that Yoga itself is keenly aware of the need to overcome its own initial "result-orientation" and acquisitiveness. The Yoga teachers themselves emphasize that the identity of the self (*puruṣa*) is not something to

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be acquired (*upādeya*).[122] He for whom the awareness of the metaphysical distinction between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* (*vivekakhyāti*) and the sheer presence (*kaivalya*) of the spirit is supposed to arise cannot in any way be "acquisitive" (*kusīda*).[123] Such statements or concessions cannot change Śaṅkara's basic position: neither Sāṅkhya theory nor Yoga practice can lead us to the ever-present goal of final liberation without the guidance of the *Veda* (*na sāṅkhyajñānena vedanirapekṣeṇa yogomārgeṇa vā niḥśreyasam-adhigamyata iti*).[124]

What is the relationship between such statements and the presentation and interpretation of Patañjali's and Vyāsa's Yoga in the Vivaraṇa? Assuming that the author was identical, what kind of reorientation, reevaluation, or change of position, would have been required? Could he have reconciled (as H. Nakamura seems to suggest) the presentation of Yoga which we find in the Vivaraṇa with his advocacy of Advaita Vedānta? It seems hardly conceivable that Śaṅkara, the Advaitin, could have retained or repeated all the statements made in the Vivaraṇa or that he could have explicated Yoga and Sāṅkhya thought without referring to what he saw as its basic defects. The author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣya* was in no way inclined towards compromise and syncretism. Even the didactic dimension of his thought would not have given him such flexibility. Śaṅkara, the Advaitin, was committed to the ultimate truth of non-dualism, and he saw the *Veda* as its unique and indispensable source.[125]

Yet, it is hardly appropriate to characterize the reorientation and change of allegiance which we would have to assume if Hacker's hypothesis were true as a "conversion". In accordance with Śaṅkara's Advaitic self-understanding, it would rather have been an act of progression and transcendence, *i.e.* of relegating Yoga practice and Sāṅkhya theory to a lower, preliminary level of insight and orientation.[126]

NOTES

1. *Cf.* A. Wezler, "Philological Observations on the So-Called Pātañjalayogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa". *Indo-Iranian Journal* 25(1983), 17-40. The shorter title *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* which is already found in the preface by the editors and, even earlier, as title of the excerpt published by Rāmanātha Śastrī in 1931 (see n. 10), has been used by P. Hacker and subsequently adopted by other authors, *e.g.* T. Vetter and S. Mayeda, and it has become the most familiar name of this work.

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2. *Cf.* YSBhV, XIII ff.

3. "Śaṅkara der Yogin und Śaṅkara der Advaitin, einige Beobachtungen". *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd-und Ostasiens* 12.13 (1968, Festschrift E. Frauwallner), 119-148; also in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. L. Schmithausen, Wiesbaden 1978, 213-242.

4. "Śaṅkarācārya and Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda, Preliminary Remarks concerning the Authorship Problem" *New Indian Antiquary* 9 (1947), 175-186; revised version in: *Kleine Schriften*, 41-58.

5. *The Chapter of the Self*, London 1978, 174.

6. *Cf* T. Leggett, *loc. cit.* — In two recent articles in Japanese, H. Nakamura has investigated various textual and doctrinal issues in the Vivaraṇa, but without systematically reviewing the authenticity problem; *cf. Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* (*Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, Tokyo) 25/1 (1976), 70-77; 26/1 (1977), 119-126. For information concerning these two articles, which do not have an immediate bearing upon the issues discussed in this chapter, I am indebted to my colleague W. Tyler. In a further contribution in English, Nakamura discusses what he calls "noteworthy ideas" in the Vivaraṇa; *cf.* "Śaṅkara's Vivaraṇa on the Yogasūtra-Bhāṣya", *Adyar Library Bulletin* 44/45 (1980-81), 475-485. Nakamura has also begun, but subsequently discontinued, a Japanese translation of the Vivaraṇa in the Buddhist journal *Āgama*. After the completion of the first version of this chapter, T. Leggett has published an English translation of the first two Pādas of the Vivaraṇa: *Śaṅkara on the Yoga-sūtras* (vol. 1: Samādhi; vol. 2: Means). London, 1981-1983. As far as the more intricate and technical portions of the text are concerned, this translation is often quite unsatisfactory; *cf.*, *e.g.*, vol. 1, 107 f., where crucial Mīmāṃsā implications and obvious inaccuracies in the printed text have been overlooked. Moreover, several scriptural references in this passage are incorrect, although they had been correctly identified by the editors (*cf.* YSBhV, 68). A. Wezler has continued his valuable philological studies of the text in the following major article: "On the Quadruple Division of the Yogaśāstra, the Caturvyūhatva of the Cikitsāśāstra and the 'Four Noble Truths' of the Buddha". *Indologica Taurinensia* 12, 1984, 289-337.

7. *Cf. A Thousand Teachings*, Tokyo, 1979, 4: "It is likely that he was familiar with Yoga, since he is the author of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣya-vivaraṇa*..."; but 65, n. 63: "The authenticity of this text has not yet been established, but as far as I can see

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now, there is no conclusively negative evidence."

8 *Cf. Studien*, 21: "das mit Ausnahme der Gotteslehre wenig originelle YViv".

9. *Cf.* G. Oberhammer, *Strukturen yogischer Meditation.* Wien, 1977; but see the cautionary remark on p. 135: "Śaṅkaras Subkommentar... von dem P. Hacker glaubt, das er dem bekannten Advaitin dieses Namen zuzuschreiben und daher in die erste Hälfte des 8, Jahrhunderts n. Chr. zu datieren ist."

10. *Cf. The Sphoṭasiddhi of Ācārya Maṇḍanamiśra with the Gopālikā of Ṛṣiputra Parameśvara.* ed. S.K, Rāmanātha śāstrī, Madras 1931, XIII.

11. *Cf. loc. cit.* XIV.

12. *Loc. cit*, XV.

13. *Cf. Gopālikā*, 193 ff.

14. *Cf. Tattvabindu by Vācaspatimiśra with Tattvavibhāvanā by Ṛṣiputra Parameśvara*, ed. V.A. Ramaswami Sastri, Annamalainagar 1936, for a discussion of the "three Parameśvaras of Kerala", see the editor's introduction, 87 ff. The work of the Payyūr family is also discussed by K. Kunjunni Raja, *The Contribution of Kerala to Sanskrit Literature.* Madras 1958, 90 ff; Kunjunni Raja criticizes the view accepted by Ramaswami Sastri that the Śaṅkara referred to in the *Svaditaṅkaraṇī* was not only the teacher, but also an uncle of Parameśvara I, and he refers to C. Kunhan Raja's suggestion "that Śaṅkara may be the author of the Niruktavārttika from which Parameśvara quotes" (93).

15. E. Stern (Philadelphia) is currently preparing an edition of this unpublished text and the *Juṣadhvaṅkaraṇī* by the same author (together with a new critical edition of the *Vidhiviveka* and the *Nyāyakaṇikā*). Mr. Stern deserves much credit for having identified not ony these Vivaraṇa quotations, but also numerous other significant references in the texts he is editing.

16. Cf, YSBhv, VII (general editor's introduction): also *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts, Adyar Library and Research Centre*, vol 8 (1972; compiled by K. Parameswara Aithal), 8f. (nos. 25-26) — For one passage of the text, a manuscript "available with the Oriental Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum", was also consulted (YSBhV, VIII). This seems to be identical with the "Trivandrum manuscript" of which A. Wezler made a much more systematic use; see below, n. 88.

17. In the case of Madhusūdhana, his commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, which follows Śaṅkara but also gives much room to

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Patañjali's Yoga, may be mentioned specifically as a work in which one might expect, but does not actually find references to the Vivaraṇa.

18. *Cf.* YSBhV, 139 (on II, 7): *sukhānuśayī tathā duḥkānuśayī-iti anyeṣām pāṭhaḥ.* In this same section, the Vivaraṇa states: *tathā ca vakṣyati dharmāt sukhaṁ sukhād rāgaḥ iti.* This seems to refer to YBh IV, 11 where, however, the Vivaraṇa (p. 331) reads *dharmāt sukhaṁ sukānuśayī rāgaḥ*, while Vācaspati's version has, indeed, *dharmāt sukham... sukhād rāgo...* In Vācaspati's version, YBh, I, 11 has *sukhānuśayī rāgaḥ duḥkhānuśayī dveṣaḥ*; this is, however, not found in the Vivaraṇa.

19. YSBhV, 246 (on III, 13); *cf.* also the different versions of YBh II, 18 and III, 6. An important variant not pointed out by the editors occurs in YBh I, 36, where the Vivaraṇa reads *vaiṣaṁya* instead of *vaiṣāradya.* In several cases, the Yogabhāṣya variants of the Vivaraṇa are supported by other manuscripts. On II, 13 (YSBhV, 151), the Vivaraṇa has a phrase *trivipākārambhī vā janmāyurbhogahetutvāt* which is missing (perhaps due to a scribal error caused by the repetition of *hetutvāt*) in Vācaspati's version and in most of the printed editions, but which occurs in some of the manuscripts and one printed text consulted by R. S. Bodas (see below, n. 20).

20. *Cf.* YSBhV, 155, line 1; on p. 157, a further YBh variant concerning (*a*) *dṛṣṭajanmavedanīya* has been noted by the editors, while other variants on the same page remain unmentioned. It should not be taken for granted that Vācaspati himself read *tatra dṛṣṭajanmavedanīyasya niyatavipākasya* instead of ... *adṛṣṭajanmavedanīyasya* etc. According to the edition of the *Bhāṣya* and *Vaiśāradī* which attempts to be "critical", the reading *dṛṣṭa-* does not seem to have any clear manuscript support. *Cf. The Yogasūtras of Patañjali with the scholium of Vyāsa and the comm. of Vācaspatimiśra*, ed. by R. S. Bodas. Revised, enlarged by the addition of the comm. of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa by V. S. Abhyankar, Bombay 1917 (Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series), 71, notes on lines 7 and 21. It seems that in preferring the reading *dṛṣṭa-*, Bodas has followed the lead of earlier printed editions (and perhaps an attempted emendation); *cf.* his survey of published and unpublished sources, Prastāvāna, X f. Nāgojībhaṭṭa obviously presupposes the reading *adṛṣṭa-* (*loc. cit.*, 275, lines 22 ff.). *Cf.* also Y. K. Wadhwani, "Ekabhavikā karmāśaya" in: Yogabhāṣya 2.13. *Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference* 28 (1976), 473-480; the autho-

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ress compares Vācaspati's and Vijñānabhikṣu's readings and interpretations, but she has not consulted the Vivaraṇa, and she seems to be unaware of the existence of the variant readings in the Vācaspati manuscripts. This is also the case with P. K. Guptā, *Pātañjala Yogasūtra: eka samālocanātmaka adhyayana. Tattvavaiśāradī evaṁ Yogavārttika ke pariprekṣya mem*, Delhi 1979, 252 ff. Both Vācaspati and Vijñānabhikṣu give occasional references to *Yogabhāṣya* variants. On II, 13, Vācaspati mentions an alternative to *ekabhavika*; *kvacit pāṭha aikabhavika"iti*; in the Vivaraṇa, this occurs once instead of *ekabhavika* (*cf.* YSBhV, 151). However, on III, 22, the Bhāṣya itself as well as Vācaspati (with one variant *ekabhavika* being listed by R. S. Bodas) has *aikabhavika*. Vijñānabhikṣu notes a variant reading *kaivalinaḥ* (instead of *kevalinaḥ*) in his commentary on I, 24 (*Pātañjalayogadarśana*, ed. Nārāyaṇa Miśra, Benares 1971, 71), as well as *aikabhavika* on II, 13 (pg. 169).

21. *Cf. eg.*, the different versions of the final statement of YBh II, 13. That the author of the Vivaraṇa considers his own reading problematic in this case, is indicated by the fact that he offers alternative explanations; but Vācaspati's "standard" version is by no means easier or more satisfactory.

22. I hope to discuss these matters in detail in a monograph on the history of the philosophical karma theories in Hinduism which is now under preparation.

23. YSBhV, 268ff. (on III, 17); Kumārila's verses are found ŚV, 383, f. (v. 131. ff.).

24. *Cf. Sphoṭasiddhi* on v. 27; ed. transl. K. A. Subramania Iyer, Poona, 1966, 69; ed. S. K. Rāmanātha Śāstrī (see above, n. 10), 193 f.

25. YSBhV, 264 (on III, 17); this quote (*gakāraukāravisarjanīyāḥ*) is also given by Śabara on MS I, 1, 5; *cf.* E. Frauwallner, *Materialien zur altesten Erkenntnislehre der Karmamīmaṃsā*, Wien 1968, 38. In YBh III, 17 the phrase occurs without reference to Upavarṣa.

26. *Cf.* BSBh I, 3, 28 (Works III, 125), where the Upavarṣa quote is: *varṇā eva tu, na śabdaḥ*; YSBhV; 267: *na vārṇāḥ padam* is perhaps a (critical) reference to this teaching which is reviewed more positively in BSBh.

27. YSBhV, 275 (on III, 17).

28. See my *Studies in Kumārila and Śaṅkara*, Reinbek 1983, ch. 1 & 3 ff.

29. YSBhV, 323 (on IV, 7).

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30. YSBhV, 331 (on IV, 11).

31. *Cf.* YBh III, 35: *vijñātāraṁ are kena vijānīyāt* (*i.e.* BU II, 4, 14 and IV, 5, 15); see the commentary on this, YSBhV, 291 f.; in YBh II, 23, the phrase *iti śruteḥ* refers to a "scriptural" claim made by others.

32 *Cf. Tattvavaiśārādī* on YS/YBh II, 22 (reference to Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad IV, 5).

33. *Cf. e.g.*, YSBhV, 183 (on II, 19): *āgamavirodha* (with reference to Taittirīya Upaniṣad II, 1) and *smṛtivirodha*; 184: *śrutiprasiddhatva* (with reference to BU II, 4, 11).

34. *Cf.* YSBhV, 55 f. (on I, 24).

35. YSBhV, 216 (on II, 32); and similarly, 123 (on II, 1): *mokṣaśāstrāṇām ca-upaniṣatprabhṛtīnām*"; see also 78 (on I, 27), where the word *āgamin* is paraphrased as vedavādin. On p. 250 (on III, 13), the *Gīta* is referred to as *āgama*. In this connection, we may also mention the phrase *avadyotakatvād āgamasya* (75; on I, 26), which is reminiscent of Śaṅkara's references to the *Veda* as a source of light.

36. *Cf.* YSBhV, 148 ff. (on II, 13); specifically 153: *sarvaśāstraviprakopaś ca syāt ... karmaśāstrānarthakye ca mokṣaśastre'py anāśvāsaprasaṅgaḥ*; also 151: *sarvaśrutismṛtiviprakopa* — *cf.* the discussion of *karman*, BSBh III, i, 1, ff.

37. See *Studies in Kumārila and Śaṅkara*, Reinbek 1983, ch. 2, § 6; 9.

38. *Cf.* YSBhV, 73 (on I, 25): *vedetihāsapurāṇayogadharmaśāstrādyāgamataḥ*.

39. *Cf.* YSBhV, 67 (on I, 25): *anumānāgamaprasiddheśvara*; *anumānāgama-virodha*. See also 114 (on I, 48).

40. See, for instance, *Gītābhāṣya* XVIII, 66 (Works II, 295); BUBh IV, 4, 22 (Works I, 934 f.).

41. *Cf.* YSBhV, 68 (on I, 25); the printed text requires several emendations, most conspicuously, l. 7 should read: *śrutīnāṁ vidhipratiṣedhārthatvād īśvarāpratyāyakatvam* instead of: ... *vipratiṣedhārthatvād...*

42. *Cf.* YSBhV, 46 (on I, 16): *vairāgyasya jñānaprasādamātratve jñānavairāgyayor ananyatvāt tadviparītayoś ca rāgājñānāyor anarthāntaratvam eva siddham*: but also 334 (on IV, 22): *yāgena svargo bhaviṣyati samādhyādinā mokṣo bhaviṣyati*.

43. *Cf.*, *e.g.*, L. de La Vallee Poussin, "Le Bouddhisme et le Yoga de Patañjali." *Melanges chinois et bouddhiques* 5 (1936/37), 223-242.

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44. *Cf.* YSBhV on 1,25 (specifically 71 f.)

45. *Cf.* YSBhV on IV, 14 f; 19; 21-24.

46. YSBhV, 83 ff.

47. BSBh II, 2, 28; Vācaspati uses the term *sahopalambhaniyama* in his *Tattavaiśāradī* on YS IV, 14.

48. YSBhV, 340 (on IV, 14).

49. *Loc. cit.*

50. *Cf.* YSBhV, 341 (on IV, 14): *svalakṣaṇabhedena-arthajñānayor upalabhyamānatvān na-avyatirekagandho'pi tataś ca vyatirekeṇa-anupalabhyamānatvād ity asiddho hetus tava.*

51. *Loc cit., na-ca-asau na-asti-iti śakyaṃ pratijñātum, yam prati siṣādhayiṣasi sa cet tadvijñānavyatiriktaḥ tathā ghaṭādir api siddhyati.*

52. *Cf* YSBhV, 345 (on IV, 16).

53. YSBhV, 351 (on IV, 19); *cf*, 843 (on IV 15): *sādhya-sādhanādi-vyavahāravilopa.*

54. YSBhV, 341 (on IV, 14).

55. *Cf.* SV, 173f. (v. 107 ff).

56. YSBhV, 343 (on I,V, 15), that there has to be relation to experience, follows from a radical application of the karman theory, which turns the whole world into a vehicle of reward and punishment.

57. YSBhV, 344 (on IV, 15).

58. YSBhV, 356 (on IV, 23)

59. *Loc. cit.*

60. *Cf.* also YSBh V, 358 ff. (on IV, 24), where the argument from "visibility" (*dṛśyatva*) is supplemented by the "teleological" Sāṁkhya-Yoga argument that all "aggregates" must be "for the sake of *puruṣa*" (*puruṣārtha*); on the use of this argument, *cf.* also USG II, 56; 70.

61. *Cf.* YSBhV. 340 ff. (on IV, 14 f); 349 f. (on IV, I9); 358 ff. (on IV, 24).

62. YSBhV, 350 (on IV, 19).

63. The word *pratyaya* appears in YS II, 20 *draṣṭā dṛśimātraḥ śuddho'pi pratyayānupāsyaḥ*; *cf.* also YS III, 35 and YSBhV, 291: *pratyaya* as reflecting the light of the *puruṣa* (*puruṣābhāsa*) — On *pratyaya* see also US XII, 6 ff; XVIII, 97 f; 109 ff.

64. YSBhV, 189 (on II, 20).

65. YSBhV, 190 (on II, 20); *cf.* 192: *buddhipratyayasākṣitvasya siddhatvāt.* — On the use of *vyabhicāra, vyabhicar-*, *cf.* also *Gītābhāṣya* II, 16 (*Works* II, 14 f.), where "being" is presented as the pure irreducible objective factor in cognition; cognition

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"deviates" and fluctuates with reference to particular and changing, *i.e.*, unreal, contents, but not with reference to "being" as such: *yadviṣayā buddhir na vyabhicarati, tat sat.* This is not, as P. Hacker (see article mentioned in n. 3, p. 131, n. 29) seems to think, a "spiritualistic" reduction of being to awareness.

66. In its "logical" connotation, the term is used YSBhV, 26; 29 (on I, 7).

67. *Cf.* BUBh IV, 3, 7; (Works I, 871), where the "light of the *ātman*" is described as *buddhivijñānāvabhāsaka* and *vyatirikta*.

68. YSBhV, 350 (on IV, 19); see above, n. 62.

69. Works I, 872; see above: Ch. 5, n. 168. — *Cf.* also BSBh II, 2, 28 (*Works* III, 250): *ataḥ pradīpavad vijñānasya-api vyatiriktāvagamyatvam asmābhiḥ prasādhitam.*

70. *Cf.* YSBhV on IV, 15 (specifically 341; 343); on the other hand, BUBh IV, 3, 7; (*Works* I, 873 f.); see also above, n. 53.

71. "Zur Bedeutung des Illusionismus bei Śaṅkara." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd-und Ostasiens* 12/13 (1968; Festschrift E. Frauwallner), 407-423; ib., 409.

72. "Śaṅkara der Yogin und Śaṅkara der Advaitin einige Beobachtungen" (see above, n. 3), 133.

73. "Śaṅkara and Buddhism." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 7 (1979), 1-42; ib., 25.

74. *Loc, cit.*, 25 f; 28.

75. *Cf.*, *e.g.*, YSBhV, 194 (on II, 22).

76. Insofar, T. Vetter's characterization of the Vivaraṇa as "wenig originell" (see above, n. 8) is somewhat surprising if measured against his assessment of USG II — which the Vivaraṇa would anticipate to a certain extent if it were an early work by Śaṅkara — as "der vielleicht bedeutendste denkerische Versuch" of Śaṅkara (see above, ch. 5, n. 53).

77. See also above, n. 39 (*anumānāgamaprasiddha*, etc.); there is, however, a more conspicuous tendency in the Vivaraṇa to use reason and inference independently, very often by presenting formal schemes of inference (*anumāna*).

78. *Cf.* "Śaṅkara der Yogin und Śaṅkara der Advaitin, einige Beobachtungen" (see above, n. 3), 124.

79. *Cf. Jayamaṅgalā*, ed. H. Śarmā, Calcutta 1926, Preface.

80. However, the identity of the authors of the Vivaraṇa and the *Jayamaṅgalā* seems to be assumed by Rāmanātha Śāstrī (see above, n. 10), XI: *ayam eva śaṅkaro vā syāt yogabhāṣyavivaraṇa-*

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sāṅkhyajayamaṅgalādīnāṁ kartā...

81. In the Payyūr family alone, this name occurs repeatedly; it is also common among the representatives of the Kerala tradition of mathematics and astronomy.

82. The *Yogatārāvalī* has been published in: *Minor Works of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*, ed. H. R. Bhagavat, Poona, second ed., 1952.

83. In this case, we would have the problem that there is already a good deal of "mature", fully developed argumentation in this work — as illustrated by our preceding observations.

84. This is done by the editors of the text; *cf.* YSBhV, 370, n. 1; the statement *praṇamāmy...bhagavatpādam apūrvaśaṅkaram* can, of course, not be attributed to the "original Śaṅkara" himself.

85. *Cf.* D. Pingree, *Jyotiḥśāstra. Astral and Mathematical Literature* (A History of Indian Literature, VI/4) Wiesbaden 1981, 47ff.

86. *Cf.* K. Kunjunni Raja, *The Contribution of Kerala to Sanskrit Literature* Madras 1958; specifically XV; XIX: 90 ff. (on the Parameśvaras).

87. But *Cf.* the lively and extensive argumentation against the Buddhists in Cidānanda, *Nītitattvāvirbhāva* ed. P.K. Narayana Pillai, Trivandrum 1953, 116-124; 201-211; on this work, which may have been composed around 1300, Parameśvara II wrote his unpublished *Vyākhyā*. The assumption that the Vivaraṇa is deliberately "archaic", avoiding references to more recent authors, would appear artificial.

88. "Philological Observations on the So-Called Pātañjalayogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa" (see above, n. 1). In a number of significant cases, Wezler has compared the printed text with the manuscript transcript, on which it is based, as well as with the "Trivandrum manuscript", the existence of which was already known to the editors, but which was only consulted in one instance; see above, n. 16. In his article, Wezler also refers to a YSBhV manuscript kept in the Woolner collection, Lahore; according to his kind information, this is a palm-leaf manuscript in Malayalam script, thus also from Kerala.

89. *Loc cit.*, 34; *cf.* ib.: "... to prove that the Vivaraṇa is in fact the oldest extant YS commentary it is not at all necessary to assume that its author was the famous Advaitin Śaṅkara.

90. *Loc. cit.*, 83.

91. There are again characteristic variants in the Vivaraṇa

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and the Vaiśāradī versions of this section; on *pravāha*, *cf.* also II, 32 (Buddhist usage); III, 2; 52.

92. *Cf.* YSBhV, 18; *cf.* also the usages of *iti* in the YBh section, 17 f.

93. A. Wezler, *loc. cit.*, 34; *cf.* 32, on *mṛjjalādijanitam.*

94. *Cf.*, *e.g.*, Manu V, 105 ff.

95. *Cf.*, *e.g.*, Mayeda's critical apparatus on US II (USG), 1 (p. 261 ff., n. 3; 180; 206; etc.).

96. Could Vācaspati have chosen not to acknowledge his acquaintance with the Vivaraṇa? But why should he have disregarded many of its more helpful readings? Wezler presents the reading *akāṣṭhamauna* instead of *akāṣṭhamauna* in YBh II, 32 as an illustration of the superiority of the Vivaraṇa version. But in this case, possession of the Vivaraṇa, which clearly repeats the word *ākāṣṭamauna*, should have prevented the acceptance of *ākāramauna* — a word which according to Wezler owes its very existence to a scribal error.

97. *Loc.*, *cit.*, 36

98. For some useful, though incomplete and inconclusive, information and discussion on citations in the Vivaraṇa, *cf.* T. Leggett's introduction to his English translation of Pādas 1 and 2 of the text (see above, n. 6).

99. See above, n. 1; 6.

100. See above, n. 3; 6.

101. BS II, 1, 3: *etena yogaḥ pratyuktaḥ.*

102. *Cf.* BSBh I, 1, 5-11; 18; 1, 4, 1-28. See also G. J. Larson, *Classical Sāṁkhya*, second ed., Santa Barbara 1979, 212 ff; on texts apparently claimed or utilized by Sāṁkhya teachers: 218.

103. *Cf.* BSBh II, 1, 1-11.

104. *Cf.* BSBh IV, 2, 21 (*yoginaḥ prati ca smaryate*).

105. *Cf.* BSBh II, 2, 1 (*Works* III, 220): *iha tu vākyanirapekṣaḥ svatantras tad yuktipratiṣedhaḥ kriyata iti eṣa viśeṣaḥ.*

106. BSBh II, 1, 3 (trans; G. Thibaut).

107. BSBh II, 1, 3 (*Works* III, 183); *cf.* II 1, 1 (*Works* III, 181): *kapilo hi na sarvātmatvadarśanam anumanyate, ātmabhedābhyupagamāt.*

108. Such "gradual" ascent relates ultimately to the *saguṇa brahman* only; *cf.* BSBh IV, 3, 14 f.

109. *Cf.* BSBh I, 3, 33 (*Works* III, 135).

110. *Cf.* the definitions of *upāsana*, BUBh I, 3, 9; GBh XII, 3.

111. *Cf.* BSBh I, 3, 13 (on *om* and the "lower" and "higher"

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brahman); IV, 1, 2 (especially *Works* III, 463: *yas tu svayam eva mandamatir...*)

112. GBh V, 26.

113. See the convincing critique of Hacker's arguments by A. Wezler, "Quadruple Division", 290-294; see also below, ch. 7.

114. BUBh III, 2, introduction (*Works* I, 792.)

115. *Cf.* BSBh I. 1, 4 (*Works* III, 16 f.): *yasya tu-utpādyo mokṣas, tasya mānasaṁ vācikaṁ kāyikaṁ vā kāryaṁ apekṣata yuktaṁ na ca-āpyatvena-api karmāpekṣaḥ svātmasvarūpatve saty anāpyatvāt* — On "mental acts" (*mānasī kriyāḥ*), see BSBh I, 1, 4 (*Works* III, 18; also Pañcapādikā ed. Rāmaśāstrī Bhāgavatācārya, Benares 1891, II, *mānasīkriyā-eṣā, na jñānam...*

116. BSBh IV, 1, 4 (*Works* III); *cf.* IV, 4, 22 (*Works* III): *na-ca-asya-ātmanaḥ sādhyasādhanādisarvasaṁsāradharmavinirmuktasya sādhanaṁ kiñcid eṣitavyaṁ.* See also the definitions of *upāsana*, BUBh I, 3, 9; GBh XII, 3.

117. *Cf.* BSBh I, 4, 7 (*Works* III).

118. *Cf.* YS IV, 29; YBh I, 2; 15; II, 2, 11; IV, 29. The term is also found in other systems, such as the Nyāya, as well as in the *Mahābhārata.* The Vivaraṇa on YBh I, 15 paraphrases *prasaṅkhyāna* as *darśanābhyāsa.*

119. *Cf.* Sureśvara, Naiṣk. III 89f. See also Maṇḍana, *Brahmasiddhi*, ed. S. Kuppuswami Sastri, Madras 1937, 30; 33ff.; 134; referring to the passage on p. 30, the commentators paraphrase *prasaṅkhyāna* as *viveka* or *vivekajñāna.*

120. *Cf.* US I, 18, 9, 12; 17; for the term *ceṣṭita* (US I, 18, 12), see also YBh I, 50: *khyātiparyavasānaṁ hi cittaceṣṭitam.* However, BSBh IV, 1, 1 f. recognizes the relative value of "repetition" (*āvṛtti*) for those of "slower understanding" (*mandamati*).

121. Naiṣk. III, 89 f.; see also BUBhV I, 818-848; III, 796-961; and T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Sambandha-Vārttika of Sureśvarācārya*, Madras 1958, XXI ff.

122. *Cf.* YBh II, 15 and below, ch. 7. Sāṅkhya itself postulates complete freedom from *kartṛtva* as well as *bhoktṛtva* for the state of *kaivalya.*

123. *Cf.* YS IV, 33: *prasaṅkhyāne'py akusīdasya sarvathā vivekakhyāter dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ.* Vyāsa paraphrases: *tato'pi na kiñcit prārthayate...*

124. BSBh II, 1, 3 (*Works* III, 183).

125. Śaṅkara is not in the category of the more flexible "pandit commentators", for whom Vācaspatimiśra seems to

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provide the prototype; yet even Vācaspati does not merely juxtapose different commentarial presentations, but seems to aim at their convergence towards, or inclusion in, Advaita Vedānta.

126. *Cf.* Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, *Vedāntakalpalatikā* I, 4; and *India and Europe*, 358.

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17

ŚAṄKARA'S YOGA PRACTICE : NOTES ON THE YOGASŪTRA-BHĀṢYA-VIVARAṆA

TREVOR LEGGETT

A *Vivaraṇa* sub-commentary on the *Vyāṣa-bhāṣya* commentary to Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*, purporting to be by Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda- (definable as the author of the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*), was publihsed in 1952 as No. 94 in the Madras Government Oriental Series. It had been put together, with impressive scholarship and patience, from a single defective manuscript by two pandits, P.S. Rama Sastri and S. R. Krishnamurti Sastri, who judged that this was indeed a work by the great Śaṅkara. It had been unknown except for publication of a small portion (Madras University Sanskrit Series, No. 6) in another context in 1932. That context showed it was already in existence in the 14th century.

In 1968, Paul Hacker published an influential essay provisionally accepting the authenticity of the text (though on somewhat different grounds), and further proposing that it may have been an early work by Śaṅkara, then a follower of the Yoga school, and only later an Advaitin. Others who have looked at it have found no absolute bar to Śaṅkara's authorship. A. Wezler examined another MS, and the existence of others is reported. He has pointed out that this *Vivaraṇa* contains some different, and sometimes superior, readings of the Vyāsa, when compared with Vācaspati's version in his massive *Tattvavaiśāradī* sub-commentary.

Wilhelm Halbfass, in an important 25-page appendix to his *Studies in Kumārila and Śaṅkara* (No. 9 of *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, Reinbek, 1983) compares some of the philosophical ideas of the *Vivaraṇa* with parallels in Śaṅkara's works, and finds striking resemblances. Two leading Japanese scholars, H. Nakamura and S. Mayeda, are inclined to think it genuine. Nakamura published a translation of Part One, the *samādhī-pāda* (in Japanese) in 36 successive issues of the Buddhist journal, *Āgama* from December

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1979. He remarked that it is not at all necessary to suppose that Śaṅkara must have been a Yoga school follower if and when he wrote this, and he pointed out in his notes instances of Advaita ideas strongly expressed in the *Vivaraṇa*. For instance, *puruṣa's* experience is not real, but merely attributed as colours are attributed to a pure crystal; this is an Advaitic view. He also pointed out a number of places where the text is defective. S. Mayeda, who has analysed a number of works attributed to Śaṅkara for authenticity, believes that the *Vivaraṇa* may well be by Śaṅkara. He gives some indications in the notes to his translation of Śaṅkara's *A Thousand Teachings* (Tokyo University Press, 1979.*

Variations in the Text

There are sixteen variations from the accepted *sūtra* text, most of them are small. *Viveka-jñānam* becomes *vivekajam-jñānam* — and hardly affects the meaning. *Sūtra* II. 19 appears not as ending with *guṇa-parvāṇi*, but with masculine plural *guṇaparvāṇaḥ*, and V-Śaṅkara does not read this as *bahuvrīhi*, but justifies it at length as a noun of agency in the masculine formed correctly from the verb. At the end of his comments, however, he allows the possibility of *bahuvrīhi*, and he also notes the standard reading as '*keṣāñcid ayameva pāṭhaḥ*'.

An important variation as regards *yoga* practice is the reading in II. 47 as *ānantya* instead of the usual *ananta*. The effect is to rule out the Hinduistic interpretation of meditation on Ananta the cosmic serpent, which Vācaspati and several other commentators allow, and replace it with meditation on infinity. (The reading *ānantya* is, however, noted in the *Candrikā* commentary for instance.)

As to the Vyāsa text, there are some hundred variations in the *Vivaraṇa*; many are slight and involve no change of meaning. But there are some radical changes which completely alter the sense, and contradict not only the standard Vyāsa of Vācaspati but even the *sūtra* itself. Again taking the examples from the sections on *yoga* practice:

1. *Sūtra* III. 36.

tataḥ prātibhaśrāvaṇa-vedanādarśāsvāda-vārtā jāyante (*Vācaspati's Vyāsa*) ... *āsvādāddivyarasa saṁvida vārttāto divyagandha-vijñānam. ityetāni nityam jāyante.*

---

* From here on, the author of the *Vivaraṇa* will be referred to as V-Śaṅkara or V-Ś.

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This *sūtra* 'From that arise supernormal knowledge and hearing, touch, taste, sight, and '*Vārtā*' follows on the previous one, which says that from *saṃyama* on what-is-for-its-own-sake, comes knowledge of *Puruṣa*. This *sūtra* describes supernormal knowledge which comes as a side-effect from the *saṃyama* on what-is-for-its-own-sake, namely *Puruṣa*. Vyāsa explains them in an unremarkable way until he comes to the last one, *vārtā*. 'From supernormal knowledge (*pratibhā*) arises knowledge of what is subtle, hidden, or remote, in the past or future. From supernormal touch, he experiences touch of the perfect ones and others. From supernormal sight, he perceives divine forms. From supernormal taste he experiences divine savours. From supernormal smell (his gloss on *vārtā*) he knows supernal fragrance. These always arise.' Vācaspati repeats all this word for word.

But *vārtā* does not mean 'small'. Hypnotized by the conviction that this must represent the remaining one of the group of five senses, Vyāsa renders it as knowledge of fragrance; and Vācaspati following him, adds that the comment is easy. Other commentators fall in with this interpretation. There seems to be a tacit agreement not to mention that *vārtā* has nothing to do with fragrance. (Only Bhoja attempts a feeble justification.) *Vārtā* refers to events in the world, news in fact. The *Vivaraṇa* gives the true meaning. (*Vivaraṇa Vyāsa*) ... *vārtātas saṃvyavahāratva-rūpam yathāvat adhigacchati*: 'From supernormal awareness-of-events (*vārtā*) he discovers the truth about worldly matters as they are.' The *Vivaraṇa* itself adds the comment that this refers to events with which he is concerned. This is an example where the text of Vyāsa has been replaced by an entirely different, and clearly superior, version. In view of what follows, it is quite possible to suppose that this was a deliberate emendation by the author of the *Vivaraṇa*.

2. The final comment to this *sūtra* by Vyāsa as given by Vācaspati, *etāni nityaṃ jāyante*, 'these always arise', is completely absent from the *Vivaraṇa*. The omission of it would seem to be deliberate, because it would be contradicted by the *Vivaraṇa* to the next *sūtra* ... 'they appear from *saṃyama* on *puruṣa*, but not in a concentrated mind (*samāhita citta*) which is detached.' The comment goes against the statement of the *sūtra* that they do arise, supported by Vyāsa's 'they always arise'.

The *sūtra* itself gives no qualification to its positive assertion which is on a par with many such statements of side-effects, for instance the perfections listed in *sūtras* II. 35-45; firmness in

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renouncing property brings clear knowledge of the conditions of birth, and establishment in not stealing brings precious things to him from all directions.

The *Vivaraṇa* comment represents a swing towards the position in the *Brahmasūtra* III. 2.7. where strenuous meditation on the Lord with-attributes does lead to the manifestation of divine attributes, but meditation on Puruṣa is for knowledge alone. (III 3.14). *ādhyānapūrvakāya samyagdarśanāyetyarthaḥ. samyagdarśanārthameva hi ihādhyānam upadiśyate*).

The two examples show the great confidence and originality with which the *Vivaraṇa* is written. They also give an idea of the swing towards Śāṅkara Vedānta, which is a feature of much of the sub-commentary.

3. A related point comes up in the Vyāsa commentary to *sūtra* I. 36, where the *Vivaraṇa* reads the Vyāsa as *vaiṣamya* (uneven), but Vācaspati reads *vaiśāradya* meaning skill. The Vyāsa commentary is referring to fixing attention on the heart-lotus, by which meditation the mind-*sattva* appears in its true nature, like shining space. Then Vyāsa says, according to the accepted text followed by Vācaspati, "By skill (*vaiśāradya*) in keeping stable in this, the perception becomes transformed into resplendent forms such as the sun or moon or a planet or a gem." Vācaspati gives some references, presumably in connection with the 'skill', to the circle of the sun and of the moon and so on, in the heart-lotus.

V-Śaṅkara, on the other hand, reads not *vaiśāradya* but *vaiṣamya* (unsteadiness), and he explains that the forms of sun and ray and so on appear because the meditation on the true form of shining space is still uneven. This view is in line with passages like the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* II. 11, and others in the *Mahābhārata*, to the effect that such shining forms are only forerunners. Under *sūtra* I. 35, the *Vivaraṇa* has already referred to the limited luminous forms like the sun, and the same word *vaiṣamya* is used there. This is quite different from Vācaspati's interpretation.

In the same context, V-Śaṅkara makes an illuminating comparison of such preliminary experiences to the smoke that is produced first when wood is rubbed to produce fire by friction. Smoke is not what is wanted; in fact, it is the opposite of what is wanted. Nevertheless, its appearance does give confidence to the fire-makers at the beginning.

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Conflict with Vācaspati

There are a good number of cases where the interpretation of the *Vivaraṇa*, on practice, runs counter to that of Vācaspati. A doctrine of Śaṅkara in the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* may be echoed not only in a philosophical section of the *Vivaraṇa*, but also in a section on meditation practice, making something entirely new.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad-bhāṣya* from IV. 3.1 on is described the successive elimination of 'lights' (sun, moon, fire, speech) until the final light remains, which is Self (*ātman*). As W. Halbfass pointed out there is a very similar chain of argument in the *Vivaraṇa* to *sūtra* II. 20:

> Because one finds that it is by something else, different from themselves, that the seen objects like jars are perceived, and their revealers like lights etc. are perceived separately. And thoughts, which reveal everything, are perceptible only by something different from themselves, so that they are known only as things seen, like jars and lights and so on.

But this parallel in philosophy appears also in the field of practice, namely *sūtra* I. 38: Or meditating on the knowledge of dream and sleep. (*svapnanidrājñānālambanaṁ vā*). Vyāsa says simply: *svapnajñanālambanaṃ vā nidrā jñānālambanaṃ vā tadākāraṃ yoginaś cittam sthitipadaṁ labhate iti.*

The *Vivaraṇa* explains:

> What the mind meditates on as its own being, that it becomes. In the dream state, there is knowledge without any physical objects like sound and so on, and the nature of that knowledge is pure illumination. Now he meditates on what that knowledge is. But not on the remembered objects (of dream) themselves. For the mind can be caught by the bridle of an object even merely remembered.

Compare Śaṅkara in the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* III. 2.4.

> Moreover the topic of dream is introduced for revealing the self-effulgence of the witnessing self as a distinct fact. This is done because in the waking state we have the existence of the contact between the objects and the senses, and an admixture of the light of the sun etc., so that the self-effulgence of the self cannot be distinguished from them.

This is clearly the basis for the *Vivaraṇa* meditation prac-

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tice: meditation on the knowledge of dream; Vācaspati's comment is altogether different:

> When in his dream he adores the exalted Maheśvara's image which abides within a sequestered forest and seems as if it were sculptured out of the moon's orb; its members and limbs are soft as lotus stems; it is made of precious moonstone gems and festooned with garlands of exceedingly fragrant jasmine and mālatī flowers; it captivates the heart. When in the very act (of adoration) he awakens with mind in undisturbed calm; then, reflecting upon that same (image) which had become the object supporting the perception in his dream, while his mind is identical in form with it, his mind reaches a stable state in that very condition.

This is the reverse of V-Ś's direction to meditate on the knowledge which illumines the dream, but never on any object of dream. Vācaspati's comment is one of several examples of the devotion to a form, elaborately described, which he recommends in his commentary, whereas nothing of the sort is found in the Vivaraṇa or in Śaṅkara's writings even in the many passages on devotion in the *Gītābhāṣya*.

Śaṅkara and Yoga Practice

Śaṅkara makes a distinction between knowledge (*jñāna, samyagjñāna, samyagdarśana, ātmadarśana* etc.) and release (*mokṣa*). Release may follow instantly on right knowledge, but the latter may be disturbed by force of past works, or by memories of past illusions (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* I. 4. 7). In these cases there is a process called *jñāna-niṣṭhā*, confirming the knowledge in meditation till the obstacles have passed away.

Śaṅkara's general programme is:

1. Attainment of purification (*sattva-śuddhi*) through *karma-yoga* (*Gītābhāṣya* II. 39).

(a) dedication of fruits of actions in worship of God, the creator-Lord,

(b) calm endurance of opposites, and

(c) *samādhi* on scriptural objects (not yet on Self).

2. Rise of knowledge (*jñāna-prāpti, ātma-jñāna, paramārtha-darśana* etc.)

3. *Sannyāsa* with *jñāna-niṣṭhā* (= *samādhi* on true Self, V. 8. and 9. *bhāṣya*)

4. *Mokṣa* (V. 12 *bhāṣya*).

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Śaṅkara presupposes skill in *samādhi* for his own spiritual practice: it is one of the qualifications (*Upadeśa Sāhasrī* I. 17. 23; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-bhāṣya* IV. 4. 33). In *Gītā-bhāṣya* II. 29, *samādhi* is one of the elements of *karma-yoga*, essential to purify the mind to receive knowledge; sometimes Śaṅkara singles out *samādhi-yoga* as the means to this end (*Gītā* IV. 38). In this commentary, Śaṅkara more than forty times follows Vyāsa's gloss '*yoga* is *samādhi*' by himself glossing *yoga* and its derivatives by *samādhi* and its derivatives. This is not dictated by the nature of the *Gītā* text, for Bhāskara commenting on the same text avoids the word.

This applies not only to the *karma-yoga* passages, but to the *jñānaniṣṭhā* passages such as *Gītā* V. 8-9; here the truth-knower (*tattvavid*), who in the introduction is called *ātmavid* and *samyagdarśin*, is directed solely to meditate with concentrated mind (*samāhita cetas*) on 'I do nothing at all', even during apparent actions like speaking and moving. This meditation is in fact natural to a truth-knower, Śaṅkara explains repeatedly: the practice is simply not to disturb it. It leads to release, after which knowledge does not remain longer; if it did, duality would not have ceased (*Māṇḍūkya-bhāṣya* VII). This is the point in the *Yoga-sūtra* doctrine that even discriminative knowledge (*vivekajñāna*), though the means to release is itself a creature of the *guṇa* and does not exist for *Puruṣa*-in-its-own-nature.

Śaṅkara makes *samādhi* one of the necessary means to release. In the philosophical texts he does not go into it in any detail, he simply assumes it. In *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* II. 3. 39-40, *samādhi* is recognized by him as taught in the Vedānta texts for Self-realization represented by the *Upaniṣads*: 'The Self indeed is to be seen, heard of, thought on, and deeply meditated on'. 'The self we must seek, must try to realize', and 'Meditate on the self as *Om*'. 'For the scripture does enjoin it (*samādhi-vidhānāt*).'

In his free composition, '*A Thousand Teachings*', he says (II. 17. 22-23:

> 22. When the mind becomes pure like a mirror, knowledge shines forth; therefore, the mind should be purified by abstention (*yama*); permanent rites, sacrifices, and *tapas* (austerities).
>
> 23. The best *tapas* of the body etc., should be performed to purify the mind. The concentration of the mind etc. (*samādhāna*) and emaciation of the body in this and that (season) (should be performed).

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In similar terms he speaks of the means to knowledge: *saṁnyāsa, śama; dama, uparama, titikṣā, and samādhāna* (*Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* IV. 4. 21). There are many such examples.

In the *Brahma-sūtra-bhaṣya* III.2.22, he confirms that the *yogins* see the Self referred to in the *Upaniṣads* in their profound meditation. He cites, moreover, a passage from *Mahābhārata* that such *yogins* are sleepless, with breathing conquered (*jitaśvāsāḥ*) with senses subdued (*saṁyatendriya*). The passage in fact refers to Kṛṣṇa sitting like a statue. Śaṅkara had no need to describe such details, and Bhāskara does not do so. It is a clear reference to to Patañjali-type meditation practice applied for Brahman-realization.

Similarly, in his introduction to the *Gītā*, he describes release in terms of an unmoving *yogin*: "He is without merit and without sin, without good or evil who is sitting in one posture, absorbed, silent, and thinking nothing (*kiñcid acintayan*)" (*Aṇugītā*). This last phrase is an echo of *Gītā* VI.25: "Setting the mind on Self, let him not think of anything (*na kiñcidapi cintayet*)." Śaṅkara cites this with approval as the highest *yoga*. It is the *citta-vṛtti-nirodha* of the *Yoga-sūtra*, where mind is directed to Puruṣa and then dissolved.

The same phrase "*na kiñcidapi cintayet*" comes in the *Gauḍapāda-kārikā* I.24; and in 25; Śaṅkara glosses '*yuñjīta*' as '*samādadhyād*'. There are many references to *samādhi* practice in the commentary to the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*.

Commenting on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I. 4. 7, Śaṅkara denies that the *cittavṛttinirodha* alone is a means to *mokṣa* apart from the Brahman-Self identity known fromVedānta. But he adds:

> *na hi ātma-vijñāna-tatsmṛtisantāna-vyatirekeṇa cittavṛttinirodhasya sādhanam asti. abhyupagamyedamuktam, na tu brahma-vijñāna-vyatirekeṇa anya-mokṣa-sādhanam avagamyate.* (For inhibition of the mental processes is not a means apart from Self-realization and the continuous remembrance of that. Admittedly it is mentioned, but it is not recognized as a means to release apart from Brahman-realization.)

In the same way, in his commentary on the *Brahman-sūtra* II. 1.3, "By that, the Yoga system is refuted," he points out that though it is authoritative on such things as meditation and renunciation, it is unacceptable on the two points already established against Sāṅkhya: the plurality of separate *Puruṣas*, and the

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unconscious *pradhāna* as source of the world. It is these two points in the Yoga system which the present *Vivaraṇa* apparently seeks to replace with Vedāntic views, in most places by hints and implications, but in *sūtra* I. 25, for instance, with lengthy and unconcealed arguments on the inevitability of a creator-Lord. Elsewhere, by hints such as calling the successful Yogin '*parameṣṭhin*' he briefly indicates that the inner self is realized as the all-creator and the Self of all (as in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV. 4. 13).

The *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* sums up Śaṅkara's standpoint on *yoga* practice. There is a clear distinction between the Yoga school and those practising the *yoga* meditation methods on the basis of Upaniṣadic truths: either meditation with *bhakti* (devotion) to the Lord as such, namely with divine attributes, or meditations on the highest Self alone.

Sūtra II. 1.3 rejects the philosophy of the Yoga school on the two grounds previously put forward against the Sāṅkhya: *pradhāna* and plurality of selves. The Yoga texts are, however, authoritative on meditation; *yoga* practice is mentioned in the *Upaniṣads*, even as to details. For instance the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* II. 8 describes meditation posture.

Bhāskara on the same *sūtra* takes a similar line, also quoting the verse of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, though strangely altered.

Under *sūtra* II. 1.3. Śaṅkara adds that the *yoga* taught in the *Upaniṣads* means meditation on the Upaniṣadic truth, thus distinguishing it from many practices of the Yoga school.

On meditation as the direct means (*antaraṅga*) to knowledge, though not to release, the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, II. 1. 5 refers to the twenty essential means to knowledge given in *Gītā* XIII. 7-11. These begin with humility, but go on to include other qualities which have nothing to do with humility, such as sense-control, detachment (*vairāgya*), withdrawal (*nirodha*) from worldly involvements, unwavering devotion to Me (God) in exclusive *yoga* (Śaṅkara glosses *a-pṛthak-samādhi*), solitude, steadiness in Self-knowledge, and end with keeping in view the goal of knowledge (namely release). So these are not "virtues like humility," but "beginning with humility, the set ending with, keeping in view the goal of knowledge." In his *Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara concludes:

> It is only when one perceives the goal of knowledge of truth, namely *mokṣa*, release, that one will endeavour to cultivate the qualities — from humility to keeping in

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view the goal of knowledge — which are the means of attaining that knowledge.

Here, as in innumerable other places, he distinguishes knowledge-of-truth from release, just as do the *Yoga-sūtra* and *Vivaraṇa* (III. 50). A typical summarizing statement, which incidentally includes the *Yoga-śāstra* as an authority, is in the Introduction to *Gītā* III.

> In all the *Upaniṣads*, in the *Itihāsas*, in the *Purāṇa*, and in the *Yoga-śāstra*, renunciation of all *karma* is enjoined on the seeker of *mokṣa* as an accessory to knowledge.

Meditation *per se* is not the means to release, but meditation on Upaniṣadic truth is the direct means to knowledge.

Knowledge, in steadiness (*niṣṭhā*) and with renunciation, both of which are natural consequences of knowledge and need only not to be disturbed, is the means to release (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I 4. 7, *Gītā-bhāṣya*, XVIII. 55).

> Meditation after knowledge is only to preserve the natural continuance of knowledge from disturbances due to memories (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I. 4. 7) of illusion, caused by prārabdha karma, which may temporarily cloud over the knowledge (*Upadeśa Sāhasrī* I.4.3).

The Swing towards Śāṅkara Advaita

When the *Vivaraṇa* practice is examined along with the theory, it appears that the *Vivaraṇa* was written not by an orthodox Yoga school follower, but by an Advaitin. The basis is the *Śāṅkara-bhāṣya* to the *Brahma-sūtra* II.1.3, to the effect that the *Yoga-śāstra* is authoritative as regards meditation, for *śruti* refers to it as such, but outside that, it shares with Sāṅkhya two defects: the doctrine of *pradhāna* (the principal defect, *pradhāna-malla*), and the doctrine of plurality of *Puruṣas*. These two defects V-Śaṅkara corrects very forcibly in the case of the principal one, and more indirectly in the second case. He avoids head-on clashes with the main texts, and where necessary follows them on points which he has refuted elsewhere.

This is not a study, and I am simply pointing out a few indications noticed during the translation. *Pradhāna*, in Yoga the unconscious and real cause of the manifestation of the universe, is declared as such in *sūtra* II. 19, and this is not challenged there. But already the five *sūtras* on God (I.24-28) have entirely discarded it as the world-cause in favour of most elaborately supported arguments for an intelligent, omnipotent, omniscient, and pur-

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poseful divine mind. This section takes up nearly one-quarter of the whole *Vivaraṇa* on the *samādhi-pāda*, itself the first third of the whole.

The arguments are teleological, ontological and analogical, and presented with confidence, originality and a large group of Upaniṣadic quotations.

As the *pradhāna* doctrine is the 'principal opponent' (punning *pradhāna-malla*), which Śaṅkara attacks, the force of his presentation of the creative divine mind is significant. (It is interesting that the *pradhāna-malla* saying is quoted in the *Vivaraṇa* also.) Some of the main themes presented are expansions of ideas in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad-bhāṣya* III.8.9 and elsewhere. This very long, runaway commentary can be summed up in its own words:

> The world has been constructed by One who knows the separate classes of living beings, of their *karma* and its means and its results, and He provided the world as an appropriate place for these to be experienced, as one might build a palace for people to live in. The earth is created by One who has the knowledge of what is to be experienced by the many living beings, like rice barley (cultivated by a farmer for others to eat).

There are a number of other places in the *Vivaraṇa* where *pradhāna* is replaced by Upaniṣadic conceptions, sometimes almost casually as it seems; for instance, the quotation under *sūtra* II.19: "From that, from this Self, space was created" (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* II.1).

The other point on which Śaṅkara rejects Sāṅkhya-Yoga doctrine is the plurality of selves. It is correct in discerning a pure Self free from qualities, but fails to perceive the unity of that Self as perceived by Manu.

The fact that in Yoga doctrine the Lord is distinguished as a particular Puruṣa (I.24) and that the Puruṣa of a *yogin* is only like the divine Puruṣa (Vyāsa to I.29) assumes distinction between them. However, V-Ś, though accepting this as it stands, elsewhere equivocates. The distinctions, after all, are made only on the basis of separate minds with which the *Puruṣas* are identified, and this identification is illusory.

Under I.41, he describes the released Puruṣa as ever freed, ever the Lord (*sadaiva muktaḥ, sadaiveśvaraḥ*), which has been given by Vyāsa (I.24,) as part of the description of the Lord. Again, V-Ś remarks that the Puruṣas being attributeless cannot concei-

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vably be different in their nature (*svarūpeṇa bhedo duravabodha eva*).

Then in the *Vivaraṇa* to I.28, speaking of what reveals itself to the yogin practising *Om*, he glosses the already slightly unexpected word *paramātman* in Vyāsa with a Vedic title for the creator-god, namely *parameṣṭhin*. This not very frequent compound comes in the *Adhyātma-paṭala* of the Āpastamba Lawbook (v. 10), on which there is a commentary by Śaṅkara likely to be genuine. He there glosses it as the creator Self-Brahman standing in the space in the heart, and explains that from Him comes forth the whole world. This same verse is quoted in the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* where it is explained as referring to the highest Self, the efficient as well as material cause of the world.

Here in the *Vivaraṇa*, it refers to the Self of the Yogin engaged in repeating and meditating on *Om*. It cannot be said that V-Ś is necessarily out of line with Vyāsa in these places, inasmuch as Vyāsa himself (IV.22) quotes a verse:

> That hiding-place where the eternal Brahman lies concealed is not under the earth, nor a mountain cave, nor darkness, nor a cavern in the deep, but the mental process when not distinguished (from him) — so the sages declare.

Here Puruṣa is equated with Brahman: "*aham brahmāsmi*."

Śaṅkara occasionally compares his methods to medical treatment; *e g.*, in the introduction to his *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* commentary, where however he takes the simile no further. In this *Vivaraṇa*, however, there is a continual edging in the direction of Śaṅkara's true attitude to the spiritual injunctions: the doctor gives a placebo to panic-stricken man who wrongly believes he has been bitten by a snake, and who is sweating and writhing in painful cramps as a result. The doctor must give the placebo with intense seriousness: "This will cure you." The placebo has the same level of reality as the source of pain, and the doctor's statement is true: the sufferer is cured. At the beginning of *Vivaraṇa* II.23 it is shown how knowledge-of-the-difference, though itself an idea, dissolves the false idea of conjunction with ideas, which is pain and bondage.

Technique

The author of this Yoga commentary was himself an expert: there are technical comments from time to time which show familiarity with the practices, and which are not derived from previous texts.

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For instance, the experiential sensations during *prāṇāyāma...*, and the interesting comment on *sa-vitarka samāpatti*, that it is like ordinary concentrated attention except that it is absolutely unbroken, and descriptions of the *buddhi* experiences, show familiarity with them.

Similarly the Śaṅkara of the *Gītābhāṣya* gives comments: on details of the practices for example, the nose-tip gaze (VI. 13).

A typically different interpretation of a *sūtra* phrase appears in the respective sub-commentaries on *sūtra* III. 38: 'From loosening of the cause of tying, and awareness of *how the mind moves*, the mind can enter another body.'

The words are *pracāra cittasya*, and Vyāsa does not feel a need to explain them, but Vācaspati glosses *pracāra* as:

cittasya gamāgamādhvāno nāḍyastasmin pracāre saṃyamāt

(it means the *nāḍis*, the paths for the coming and going of mind). V-Ś. is quite different, nothing to do with *nāḍi* practices:

'*asminnimitte hṛṣyati muhyati lubhyati cānena kāraṇena*' *ity evamādi svacittasañcaraṇasatattvavedanāñca*

'from this cause it thrills, or, is deluded, or it is disturbed on account of that cause' — this sort of awareness of the movements and real state of the mind.

Thus here Śaṅkara shows the same lack of enthusiasm for *nāḍi* practice as elsewhere, even when he has to comment on them (*e.g. Gītā-bhāṣya* introduction to IX).

The Experimental Basis

If this text is genuine, it will establish the experimental and experiential basis behind Śaṅkara's view of revelation. *Śruti* is a revelation of truth, and a great point in the *Upaniṣads* is that this truth is confirmable today directly. Yoga experiences are not to be brushed aside as 'auto-hypnosis'; the Yogins see the Self in their meditation, says the *Brahmasūtra* III. 2. 24. But he stresses in many places that final release is not a special mental state; it is in fact complete separation from *buddhi*.

Experimental results are not subject to criticism from a standpoint which takes no account of them. In the early nineteenth-century battle between the rival theories of the nature of light — waves which spread and may annihilate each other, or particles which can not do so — the two positions were taken as fundamentally and irreconcilably opposed. The wave theory

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triumphed for a long time. But today the physicist reports light registering as particles, or as waves, depending on the nature of the experimental set-up. He is not accused of inconsistency, nor is it supposed that his views must have changed between the experiments.

In the same way, it may not be necessary to suppose that Śaṅkara was inconsistent, or that his views changed during his career. The experiential results, confirmations of revelation, may be true, but inconsistent from a standpoint which has not per formed the experiments.

Citations from Sacred Authority

There are some unusual features in the use of sacred authority In the first third of the *samādhi-pāda*, V-Ś cites Sāṅkhya masters quoted by Vyāsa, and some grammarians, but only one *śruti* text, *viz. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* II. 4. 4, on bringing a pupil's mind to concentration (*samādhi*).

Then in the middle of the very long sub-commentary to I. 25, V-Ś suddenly begins to quote *Upaniṣads* (*Muṇḍaka* I. 1. 9, and *Kaṭha* VI. 12); a little further on there is a whole group of them. All are texts used by Śaṅkara; one of them (*Taittirīya-saṁhitā*, II. 1. 1), 'Vāyu is the swiftest god', is here used to make the same point as in Śaṅkara's *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* false statements are no praise.

The second part has many quotations, but in the third and fourth, they total only five.

There are a few texts not traced, as there are in Śaṅkara's authenticated works. He had access to Upaniṣadic texts not now extant, for example, the account of the answer of silence in his *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*, III. 2. 17. Similarly he knew of other works on *yoga*, not now available. For instance, in his *Taittirīya-upaniṣad-bhāṣya*, I. 6. 2, he refers to *yoga-śāstra* for description of the *nāḍī* called *suṣumnā*, not however to be found in Patañjali, Vyāsa, or the present *Vivaraṇa*. A *Yoga-śāstra*, said to give details of *nāḍī* practice, is named here as Hairaṇyagarbha.

Five texts are untraced; they include two creation texts referring to Prajāpati. In a couple of places the *Gītā* is quoted without direct acknowledgement. The identified texts are: 23 *śruti*, and 34 *smṛti*. (Those simply repeated from Vyāsa are not included).

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Śruti (*Upaniṣad*)	No. of texts	*Smṛti*	No. of texts
Bṛhadāraṇyaka	8	Gītā	11
Chāndogya	3	Mahābhārata (excluding Gītā)	10
Taittirīya	3		
Kaṭha	3	Manu	10
Muṇḍaka	2	Gautama	2
Praśna	1	'a Purāṇa'	1
Mahānārāyaṇa	1		
Śvetāśvatara	1		
Subāla	1		

The sources and proportions agree well with Śaṅkara's established preferences.

It must be significant that the *Gītā* verse (XI. 55) which Śaṅkara quotes in his presentation of worship of God is characterized by him in his *Gītābhāṣya* as summing up the whole message of the *Gītā*.

Similitudes

A possible counter-indication to Śaṅkara's authorship is the very great number of similitudes in this text. In a sense, they may substitute for the very frequent citations of *śruti* and *smṛti* in his other works, and of which there are relatitively few here. Some of them are brilliant, and as far as I can find out, original.

(1) Yogic omniscience is illustrated by the example of an expert goldsmith who can accurately estimate the weight of a piece of gold by merely looking at it. He needs no scales, as the *yogin* needs no senses, for his knowledge. Nevertheless the scales are of use in demonstrating the weight to his customers.

(2) Sense-impressions are compared to a seal (*mudrā*) and the impress that it leaves (*pratimudrā*). Enquiries have produced no example of this analogy in early Indian literature, though it appears in the Record of Linchi in China (9th century) illustrating accurate transmission of realization.

(3) The fact of equality is the very thing that destroys it — illustrated by the existence of two kings of equal power, each of whom would think he had a good chance.

(4) Animal sacrifice is akin to rape.

Conclusion and Summary

In view of the very long run-away commentary on *sūtras* I. 23-29, this can hardly have been written by an orthodox

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Yoga school follower. There are a number of swings towards Śaṅkara's general position: in the practice sections, his practice of discriminating the light of the Self is substituted for standard *yoga* practices. In places, the Vyāsa is altered, or omitted, and a *sūtra* contradicted.

Though head-on clashes are avoided, the doctrine of plurality of *Puruṣas* is eroded by describing *Puruṣa* as *īśvara*, *parameṣṭhin*, and *parameśvara*. (Vyāsa's own identification of *Puruṣa* with Brahman is also noted.)

These are the two points on which Śaṅkara rules out the Yoga school, though he accepts *yoga* practice, up to trance, as giving Self-vision. His *yoga* practice is first for a result, namely *sattva-śuddhi*, which leads to knowledge, the means to release but not release itself. Where the operation of knowledge to produce release is impaired by memories of illusion, or *prārabdha-karma*, meditation is prescribed to remove the disturbances to the natural continuation of knowledge and its remembrance, until release. This meditation is not action-for-a-result: it is cancelling illusion merely. In places, in the *Vivaraṇa*, the analogy of medical treatment becomes the analogy of a placebo.

It seems possible that Śaṅkara wrote a *Vivaraṇa* on the *Yogasūtra-bhāṣya*, swinging the commentary, at times forcibly but usually tactfully, towards his own position.

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18

ŚAṄKARA AND MĪMĀṀSĀ

K. KUNJUNNI RAJA

Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta are the two great systems of orthodox Hinduism, accepting the self-validity and authoritativeness of the Vedas. Mīmāṁsā laid stress on the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the *Veda* consisting of the injunctive and prohibitary rules (*vidhi* and *niṣedha*) together with the *arthavāda* portion consisting of supplementary passages explaining the significance and importance of the rituals. Vedānta was concerned with the *Brahma-kāṇḍa* or the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* dealing with the great statements (*mahāvākyas*) of eternal truth in the *Upaniṣads*. The one stressed ritualistic action while the other stressed knowledge. There was no enmity or clash between the two; often scholars were proficient in both the schools. Early Mīmāṁsā showed little interest in *mokṣa* or release, and regarded heaven or *svarga* as the reward for proper performance of the rituals;[1] the individual *ātman* is accepted as eternal, and indispensable for establishing the efficacy of rites; but later Vedānta, which accepted the identity of the individual *ātman* with the absolute Brahman, asserted that the individual *ātman* is real only from the worldly point of view (*vyāvahārika*) and is unreal from the standpoint of the highest truth. Mīmāṁsakas had to accept the reality of the individual *ātman* as the basis of the Vedic rites.

Both tradition and modern scholarship in general consider Śaṅkara as the most severe critic of Mīmāṁsā, rejecting the value of action (*karma*) in effecting final release (*mukti*). According to Śaṅkara's Vedānta, *mokṣa* is not something to be obtained, but to be realized. Really speaking we are not at all bound, but we think we are bound because of our ignorance or *avidyā*, and what is needed is the removal of this ignorance through knowledge. The theory of transmigration and *karma* is based on time and space, which are unreal, and exist only at the *vyāvahārika* level and not at the absolute level. It is, however, conceded that philosophy is needed only for those at the *vyāvahārika* stage, and some sort of

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action may be helpful to the seeker after truth as a preliminary step to clean his mind (hand body) for competence to realize the knowledge. It is only the knowledge (of the truth contained in the *mahāvākyas*) understood and realized that leads to *mukti* (*jñānād eva tu kaivalyam*).

Śaṅkara is emphatic that knowledge of Brahman is the only means to final release, rejecting action in any form as a cause for final release. Certain ethical and moral actions such as *yama*, *niyama*, *ahiṁsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, *aparigraha*, etc; and austerities and concentration of the mind are recommended as initial steps for purifying the mind.[2]

Kumārilabhaṭṭa and his followers accepted release or *mokṣa*, but explained it in their own way. There are four kinds of action ordained by the Vedic texts. *Nityakarmas* or compulsory acts like the daily *sandhyāvandana* do not produce any positive results, but their non-performance would produce evil consequences. The second category of religious acts is occasional and specific (*naimittika*) and is similar. The third category of religious acts is called *kāmya* or optional acts to be performed if some specific results are intended. The fourth category of acts is constituted of prohibitions (*niṣiddha*); if performed, it would produce sin to the performer.

The Mīmāṁsakas argue that by performing the first two categories of actions and avoiding the other two, one can exhaust the results of past *karmas* by enjoying them and attain the goal or supreme happiness which is *mokṣa*. When the cause of misery is removed, the mind is able to enjoy the bliss which is the real nature of *ātman*, as indicated by scriptural passages like "*ānandam brahmaṇo rūpam, tacca mokṣe'bhivyajyate.*" Kumārilabhaṭṭa says:

tatra jñātātmatattvānāmbhogāt pūrvakriyākṣaye
uttarapracayāsattvād-deho notpadyate punaḥ.
karmajanyopabhogārthaṁ śarīraṁ na pravartate
tadabhāve na kiñciddhi hetustatrāvatiṣṭhate.
mokṣārthī na pravarteta tatra kāmyaniṣiddhayoḥ
nityanaimittike kuryāt pratyavāyajihāsayā.
prārthyamānam-phalaṁ jñātaṁ na cānicchor-bhaviṣyati
ātmajñe caitad-asmīti tajjñānamupayujyate.

(*Ślokavārttika, Sambandhākṣepaparihāra*, 108-111)

Śaṅkara seems to attack this theory of Kumārilabhaṭṭa in his Bhāṣya on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*:

"*kāmyapratiṣiddhayor-anārambhāt, ārabdhasya ca upabhogena kṣa-*

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yāt, nityānuṣṭhnāena ca pratyavāyābhāvāt, ayatnata eva svātmanyavasthānaṁ mokṣaḥ, athavā niratiśayāyāḥ svargaśabdavācyāyāḥ karmahetutvāt karmabhya eva mokṣaḥ iti cet na"

Explaining this passage in his *Vārttika*, Sureśvara quotes the relevant verse[3] from Kumārilabhaṭṭa, and refers to him as *Mīmāṁsakammanya*:

iti mīmāṁsakaṃ-manyaiḥ karmoktaṁ mokṣasādhanam
pratyākhyāyātmavijñānaṁ tatra nyāyena nirṇayaḥ.

Thus according to Sureśvara Śaṅkara is attacking Kumārilabhaṭṭa in the passage cited. This Mīmāṁsā view is explained in the *Mānameyodaya* and other works also.

The *karma* theory is generally accepted both by the Mīmāṁsakas and the Advaitins; our daily good and evil actions leave behind a residual power which produces reward or punishment in the future. According to the Mīmāṁsakas actions produce a new potential called *apūrva* which gives rise to the fruits of the action. *Apūrva* is the connecting link between the actions and the fruits of the actions. *Apūrva* is not mentioned in the *Vedas*, but is assumed logically through the *pramāṇa* of *arthāpatti*. The individual *ātman* is the locus of this *apūrva*.

Śaṅkara, who accepts the *karma* theory only at the *vyāvahārika* level of reality, criticises the Mīmāṁsāka's assumption of a new entity called *apūrva* to connect the actions and their later fruits. In the *Bhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra*, 3. 2. 38, Śaṅkara says that Īśvara who is worshipped through the prescribed actions can be assumed to be capable of distributing the results of the actions, and therefore there is no need to accept *arthāpatti-pramāṇa* and assume *apūrva* for that. Assuming the existence of Īśvara who is sentient is better than assuming *apūrva* which is insentient to explain the apportioning of the fruits of the action.

"*apūrvasya acetanasya kāṣṭhaloṣṭa-samasya cetanāpravartitasya pravṛttyanupapatteḥ, tad-astitve ca pramāṇābhāvāt. arthāpattiḥ pramāṇam iti cet na. īśvarasiddheḥ arthāpatti-kṣayāt.*"

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī explains clearly this view of Śaṅkara, while commenting on the *Mahimnaḥ Stotra* line:

"*na karma pradhvastam-phalati puruṣārādhanamṛte*" (verse 20)

Maṇḍanamiśra, who is generally considered to have been an elder contemporary of Śaṅkara, and who was both a Mīmāṁsaka and an Advaitin, accepting both *karma* and *jñāna* as helping in the final release, advocated the view that *prasaṅkhyāna* (meditation) should be observed until *ātman* is realized, and that this *prasaṅkh-*

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yāna is a kind of mental action. Śaṅkara rejects this kind of *prasaṅkhyana* or *dhyāna* as the direct cause for release. In his *Bhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra* 1. 1. 4, Śaṅkara distinguishes between *dhyāna* or meditation and *jñāna* or knowledge. The knowledge of the meaning of identity statements or the *mahāvākyas* of the *Upaniṣads* is like perception which is automatic and which does not involve action. Action is involved only when there is a choice to do or not to do; *dhyāna* or meditation involves a choice, and is, therefore, action, whereas *jñāna* does not involve a choice and is not an action.

Śaṅkara, however, recognises and recommends *parisaṅkhyāna* in the *Upadeśasāhasrī* I. 3. 112-116. He does not call it *dhyāna* or meditation; it is a kind of recapitulation and reflection. Śaṅkara who rejects *prasaṅkhyāna* even in the *Upadeśasāhasrī* (I. 18. 9ff) does not explain the distinction between the two. *Parisaṅkhyāna* consists in recapitulating the conclusions reached through one's study and discussion with the teacher, and reflecting on them.[4]

This kind of reflection is described for seakers after final release, "who are devoting themselves to destroying their acquired merit and demerit and do not wish to accumulate new ones." Mayeda calls it a kind of meditation; but it cannot be *dhyāna* which involves action; it must be a kind of reflection, based on awareness that the self is different from what is experienced through the senses. Śaṅkara does not reject action altogether, but considers it as subordinate to *jñāna*. Even meditation, which is mental action, has only a secondary place. There is difference between the injunctions in the *karma-kāṇḍa* enjoining actions and informing us of their results and the apparent injunctions in the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, such as

"*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*."

According to Pūrvamīmāṁsā, only the injunctive sentences in the *Vedas*, commanding human beings to perform certain actions, are of primary importance, and other sentences like the Upaniṣadic statements, including the *mahāvākyas* are to be construed as *arthavādas*, being subordinate to them. The Upaniṣadic passages which speak of *Ātman* and its identity with Brahman only serve the purpose of eulogizing *Ātman* which is to enjoy the fruits of the religious acts enjoined in the injunctive sentences. This view is not acceptable to the Vedāntins. Śaṅkara says that the sentences revealing the truth have self-validity:

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"*na vākyasya vastvanvākhyānaṁ kriyānvākhyānaṁ vā pramāṇe kāraṇam. kiṁ tarhi? niścitaphala-vijñānotpādakatvam.*"[5]

Even when disagreeing with some of the views of the Mīmāṁsakas, Śaṅkara accepted the methodology of interpretation of the sentences as evolved by the Mīmāṁsakas. The *Upaniṣads* contain apparently contradictory statements. In explaining them in a harmonious and cogent manner the Mīmāṁsā rules have been recommended even in the *Brahmasūtra*, 1. 1. 4, '*tat tu samanvayāt*.'

NOTES

1. *Brahma-sūtra*, 4.3.12 (*paraṁ jaiminiḥ, mukhyatvāt*) says that according to Jaimini *Brahmaloka* of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is "*para brahma*".

2. See *Upadeśasāhasrī*, I. 17. 21-23; also *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 1.1.1.

3. *Mokṣārthī*...

4. Perhaps similar to *nididhyāsana*.

5. *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 1.4.7.

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19

ŚAṄKARA AND PŪRVAMĪMĀṀSĀ

P. RAMACHANDRUDU

Śaṅkara is not in favour of accepting the view that Pūrvamīmāṁsā and Uttaramīmāṁsā constitute one *śāstra*; for once it is found that three of the four *anubandhas*, *i.e. viṣaya*, the subject matter, *prayoana*, the purpose to be achieved, and the *adhikārin*, the person who is qualified to undertake the study, are different in each one of the two systems with also two different authors, they should be taken as two different treatises as in the case of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, or Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. This point is made clear by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the first *sūtra* of the *Brahmasūtra* itself. In reply to the suggestion that '*atha*' may be understood in the sense of "after knowing about *karma*," *i e.* after the study of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā-śāstra*, he states that this meaning cannot be accepted on three counts — first, even before studying *Pūrvamīmāṁsā*, one can seek and acquire the knowledge of Brahman, because there is no authority to say that *karmajijñāsā* is the *aṅga* of (auxiliary to) *brahmajijñāsā* or vice versa, or that the same person who is qualified to perform *karma* is qualified to know Brahman. Secondly, these two *jñānas* — *karmajñāna* and *brahmajñāna* — have two different purposes, the former having prosperity here and hereafter as its purpose, and the latter, salvation. The *dharma*, the subject of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā*, is a thing to be achieved or produced afresh through action, whereas Brahman, the subject of Vedānta, is a thing ever existing with no scope for any action, which cannot produce *mokṣa*, the Brahmic state, or bring about changes in it, or acquire it or bring some improvements in it. Moreover *dharma* can be known only through *Veda*, while Brahman can be known not only through the *Veda*, but also through one's own experience. After explaining these fundamental differences between these two systems, regarding the subject and the purpose, Śaṅkara indicates how the *adhikārins* also are different; for a man of various desires is the *adhikārin* for *dharmajñāna*, and a man free from all desires

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(*ihāmutrārthabhogavirakta*) is the *adhikārīn* for *brahmajñāna*. With so much of difference in *viṣaya*, *phala* and *adhikārin* persisting, how would it be possible to accept these two Mīmāṁsās as constituting one *śāstra*?

But Śaṅkara is not unaware of the fact that, though differing from each other in some of the fundamental issues, these two *śāstras*, engaged as they are in interpreting Vedic passages, contain many points of common importance. Therefore, they are not only two allied systems like Sāṅkhya and Yoga or like Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, but are also complementary to each other. Thus he quotes many *nyāyas* (rulings) from Pūrvamīmāṁsā to explain a subject of discussion on hand on many occasions. In some places an objection is raised on the basis of a *nyāya* of Pūrvamīmāṁsā, and in some places, an objection is met by showing a *nyāya* as an authority (as is done very often in the third *adhyāya* of his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*). He accepts *pramāṇas* like *arthāpatti* (implication) and many more theories like the *svataḥprāmāṇyavāda*, the *apauruṣeyatva* of the *Vedas* (of course with a slight modification), etc., following the Bhāṭṭa school, and thus is responsible for the well-known śāstric maxim, "*vyavahāre bhāṭṭanayaḥ*." But he has emphatically declared that Vedānta is a *śāstra* different from, and independent of, *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* on account of difference in the fundamental issues" (*svatantrameva brahmaśāstrapramāṇakaṁ vedāntavākyasamanvayāditi. evam ca sati 'athāto brahmajijñāsā' iti etadviṣayaḥ pṛthak śāstrārambhaḥ upapadyate*, etc. *BS*, 1.1.4).

But there are two places in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* where Śaṅkara appears to be contradicting his own proclaimed view about these two systems being different. While discussing the meaning of '*atha*' in the first *sūtra*, he states "*svādhyāyānantaryaṁ tu samānam*" which means that '*atha*' need not be understood in the sense of "after studying the Vedic texts" because, in the first *sūtra* of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* itself ("*athāto dharmajijñāsā*), '*atha*' is taken in this sense and the same would hold good regarding *brahmajijñāsā* also. This would be possible only when these two Mīmāṁsās are accepted as constituting one scripture. In the *Śarīrabhāvādhikaraṇasūtra* under the *sūtra* "*eka ātmanaḥ śarīre bhāvāt*" (3.3.53), he raises a question. He asks: where is the need to establish in this *adhikaraṇa* that there is a *jīva* who survives the body after death; because this point has been mentioned at the beginning of the *śāstra*, in the first *pāda*, "*śāstra-pramukha eva prathame pāde*." Here too '*śāstra*' referred to is *Pūrvamīmāṁsā*. In reply to this Śaṅkara says: "Though

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Śabarācārya and Vṛttikāra had mentioned this point at the beginning of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā*, keeping this *adhikaraṇa* of the *Brahmasūtra* in view, it was not mentioned by Jaimini, the author of the *Mīmāṁsā-sūtras*; therefore Bādarāyaṇa had to mention it in his *Brahmasūtra*." This implies that had Jaimini discussed this point in his *sūtras*, Bādarāyaṇa would not have discussed this again in his *sūtras*. This question and answer of Śaṅkara suggest that he is of the opinion that these two Mīmāṁsās do not constitute one scripture.

Perhaps to avoid this apparent contradiction the *Pañcapādikā* explains the word "*samānam*" in the sentence —"*svādhyāyānantaryam tu samānam*" as mere ordinary cause only, but not a perfect cause which is sure to produce the result." The *Bhāmātī* explains this sentence as follows: *Vedādhyayana* is a cause common to both *dharmamīmāṁsā* and *brahmamīmāṁsā*, because the word '*dharma*' in '*athāto dharmajijñāsā*' includes 'Brahma' also by *upalakṣaṇa*. Thus the author of the *Bhāmatī* appears to feel that according to Śaṅkara, in the first *sūtra* of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* itself it is stipulated that *brahmajijñāsā* is possible only after *Vedādhyayana*. After a long discussion, Appayadīkṣita states (in the *Parimala*) that Śaṅkara accepts *ekaśāstratva* (being one scripture) for these to Mīmāṁsās by *prauḍhivāda*, deliberately, though there are some fundamental differences.

But this apparent contradiction on the part of Śaṅkara may be explained away like this. Many *nyāyas* — the interpretatory rules which are finalised in the *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* system are frequently used and cited as authority by Śaṅkara, and his followers like Padmapāda, Vācaspatimiśra and others, which means, all of them are required in the Uttaramīmāṁsā, but are not discussed in the *Brahmasūtras* as they can be borrowed from that *Mīmāṁsā*, the main purpose of which is to lay down the rules of interpretation of Vedic passages. In the first *sūtra* of Mīmāṁsā "*athāto dharmajijñāsā*" the sentence "*svādhyāyo'dhyetavyaḥ*" is taken as the *viṣayavākya* and it is maintained that the purpose of *svādhyāya* (acquiring the knowledge of Vedic text under a *guru*) is the *arthajñāna* (knowing the meaning of the *Veda*) and therefore one should study *dharma*. As far as the author of this *sūtra* is concerned, the whole *Veda* whether it is in the form of *mantra* or *brāhmaṇa* or *āraṇyaka* or *upaniṣat*, teaches *dharma* only. How each section teaches *dharma* is a different question. According to him, *Upaniṣads* also may be useful in teaching *dharma* by discussing about the nature of *jīva*

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who is the performer of *karma* and these Upaniṣadic discussions can be interpreted in such a way as to suit *dharma*, the main subject of the *Veda*. Thus as the first *sūtra* itself makes it clear *vedādhyayana* is an essential prerequisite for the study of *Upaniṣads* also which should teach *dharma* being a part of the *Veda*. Therefore, by introducing the *nyāya* finalised in the *Dharmajijñāsā-sūtra*, Śaṅkara is correct in saying, "*svādhyāyānantaryaṁ tu samānam.*" In view of the argument, this interpretation of Vācaspatimiśra (of this sentence) appears to be more appropriate than the one given by Padmapāda.

Regarding the second statement of Śaṅkara (in the *śarīra bhāvādhikaraṇa*) it may be said that he has raised the question and answered it to show that, in some theories of common interest, what is implicit in Jaimini's system is made explicit in that of Bādarāyana. As was clearly stated by Kumārilabhaṭṭa, the Pūrvamīmāṁsā may have to depend on Uttaramīmāṁsā for solving certain problems as in the case of *ātmāstitva* and the correct knowledge of Ātman.

"*ityāha nāstikyanirācikariṣṇuḥ*
ātmāstitām bhāṣyakṛdatra yuktyā
dṛḍhatvam-etadviṣayasya bodhaḥ
prayāti vedānta-niṣevanena" (*Ślokavārtika*, 1.1.5, verse 148

At the beginning of his *Bhāṣya* on the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, Śaṅkara states that the existence of Ātman is known only through *śruti* and so he finds fault with the Mīmāṁsakas and Naiyāyikas saying that having known about the existence of Ātman specially its *lokāntara-sambhandha* from the *Veda*, they start asserting that it can be known through perception and inference. This is an indication to show how Mīmāṁsakas have to depend on Vedānta (*uttara-kāṇḍa*) for some theories. Therefore, these two statements do not alter the position of Śaṅkara who accepts that these two *tantras* are different because of their divergent views on some fundamental issues which are briefly presented below.

1. According to the Mīmāṁsakas there is no beginning or end of this world. Having admitted the theory that the world would continue for ever as it is existing now (*na kadācidanīdṛśaṁ jagat*) they do not accept *mahāpralaya* and creation of the world by God, though agreeing that *avāntarapralaya* is possible. Therefore the *Veda* is eternal and *apauruṣeya* — not the product of human intelligence. But Śaṅkara accepts *mahāpralaya* and creation, etc. According to him, the *Vedas* are produced by God, but

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not by ordinary human beings. From what he writes under the *sūtra*, "*śāstrayonitvāt*" (*BS*, 1.1.3) it appears as though he, like the Naiyāyikas, is in favour of accepting independence of God in composing the *Veda* because he maintains omniscience of God on the strength of his producing such a vast Vedic literature which itself is like omniscient (*sarvajñakalpa*) by citing the example of authors like Pāṇini who must be knowing much more than what they could convey through their writings. All this implies that God had composed the *Veda* to convey whatever he knew through it. But, while commenting on the *sūtra*, "*ata eva ca nityatvam*" (*BS*, 1.3.29) Śaṅkara says that there is no author of the *Veda* who has composed it by himself and even God had been handing down the *Veda* at the end of each *pralaya* to the next creation. Thus there is not much difference regarding the *apauruṣeyatva* of the *Veda* between the *Mīmāṁsakas* and Śaṅkara. The only difference is that even the *Veda* cannot be *nitya* ultimately according to Śaṅkara, because Brahman alone is *nitya*, everything else being *anitya*.

2 Śaṅkara does not agree with the Mīmāṁsaka that the whole Vedic literature is intended to teach *karma* and that any passage which does not have bearing on *karma* should be deemed as without purpose or it may be interpreted as having a direct or indirect connection with the passages teaching *karma* by extolling the same. He maintains that it may be possible to connect some of the *arthavādas* with the *vidhivākyas* — sentences ordaining *karma*, but it is impossible to connect the *Upaniṣads*, which teach about the Ātman, which is free from all kinds of *karma*, with them. Therefore, he asserts that the *Upaniṣads* have unquestionable authority of their own, independent of the Vedic portions teaching *karma* revealing the nature of the ever-existing *Ātman* which is beyond the purview of *karma* (see *samanvayādhikaraṇa*, *BS*, 1.1.4).

3. Ignoring the authority of *arthavādas* which are part of the Vedic literature, and of the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*, etc. the Mīmāṁsakas maintain that the different gods mentioned in the *Vedas* and *Itihāsas* have no body. But Śaṅkara argues that the so-called *arthavādas* cannot be set at nought (*BS*, 1.3.3) and that on the authority of much works, *devatās* should be accepted as having body (*BS*, 1.3.26).

4. While refuting the theory of *sphoṭa*, Mīmāṁsakas accept that the *varṇas* (letters) are eternal. But Śaṅkara is not very particular regarding the *nityatva* of the *varṇas* also (*BS*, 1.3.28).

5. *Karma* only can give either pleasure or pain to the beings

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according to the Mīmāṁsakas. In the "*parāyattādhikaraṇa*", Śaṅkara has established that it is only Īśvara that gives pleasure or pain being guided by their actions (*BS*, 2.3.42).

In order to justify the capacity of *karma*, which perishes immediately after it is performed, to produce the result in future after many years or even births, Mīmāṁsakas accept an unseen power called *apūrva* which is generated by the action and remains associated with the doer till the result is produced, which means that the result is produced by *apūrva*. In *phalādhikaraṇa* (*BS*, 3.2. 39-41) Śaṅkara contends that an inert *apūrva* cannot produce *phala*, and therefore God has to be accepted as the dispenser of *phala* of the actions. He is not very particular about accepting or rejecting *apūrva*: he is mainly concerned with maintaining that an inert *apūrva* is not capable of producing *phala* by itself (*BS*, 3.2.4).

6. Śaṅkara is never tired of repeating five points in all his *Bhāṣyas*, *viz.* that (1) *karma* and *brahmajñāna* are antagonistic to each other and therefore they can never go together, (2) that *jñāna* alone is the direct means of *mokṣa*, (3) that *karma* can never lead to *mokṣa* which is nothing but the Brāhmic-state, (4) that *karma* may be one of the many means of *jñāna* through the purification of mind, and (5) that *karma* and *upāsanā*, which also comes under *karma*, may lead one to the *saguṇabrahmaloka*.

Under the "*puruṣārthādhikaraṇa* (*BS*, 3.4.1-17) it is established that the *ātmajñāna*, got through *Vedānta* which destroys the feeling of *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* (the sense of being performer and enjoyer) makes a person lose his *adhikāra* for the performance of *karma*, which requires the sense of agency and enjoyership, etc. on the part of a performer. At the beginning of the *Bhāṣya* on the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, Śaṅkara states that the *mantras*, "*Īśāvāsyam*," etc. do not have their application in the performance of *karma*, because they talk about the real nature of Brahman which is pure, free from sin, one, eternal, bodiless, and all-pervading. Under the second *mantra* of the same *Upaniṣad* he declares that the conflict between *karma* and *jñāna* is unshakable like a mountain. At the beginning of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara clearly states that *karma-phala* and *jñāna-phala* are entirely different.

In his *Bhāṣya* on *śīkṣāvallī* of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, while declaring that *jñāna* alone can lead one to *mokṣa*, Śaṅkara says that *karma* may be helpful to attain *jñāna* through the purification of the mind. He also declares that even without *karma*, which is expected to destroy the obstructions (*pratibandha*) to *jñāna*, one

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can get *jñāna*, because there are other things like the grace of God, penance, meditation, observing the virtues like non-violence, celibacy, etc. which are helpful in producing *jñāna* through the destruction of *pratibandha*. Moreover, *śravaṇa* (listening to the texts) *manana* (understanding), and *nididhyāsana* (contemplation), etc. are said to be the direct means of *jñāna*. Therefore, *karma* alone need not be considered as the means of *jñāna*, he declares.

Jaimini and Śabara do not appear to be much concerned with *mokṣa* and its means. But later Mīmāṁsakas like Kumārila-bhaṭṭa have some theory of their own about *mokṣa* and its means. According to them *mokṣa* is nothing but being oneself (*svātmanya-vasthānam mokṣaḥ*). This can be achieved thus: by not performing *kāmya-karma* (actions which give some desired results) and *niṣiddha-karma* (prohibited actions), the need to take another birth to enjoy their results is avoided. The *prārabdha-karma*, the action which has started giving its result, can be destroyed by enjoying its result. The *pratyavāya* (the sin which accrues by not performing *nitya-naimittikakarmas*) can be avoided by strictly performing all of them. Thus one can get *mokṣa* in course of time in this system of *karma* without any other means like *jñāna* in a just natural way. This view of *Mīmāṁsakas* is refuted by Śaṅkara at the beginning of the commentary on *Śīkṣāvallī* of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*. It is impossible for any person either not to do *kāmya-karma* and *niṣiddha karma*, or to exhaust the previous *karma* accumulated in the past without beginning. It is also not correct to say, as the Mīmāṁsakas do, that *nitya-karmas* do not produce any *phala*, while their non-performance gives *pāpa*, because the non-performance, which is an *abhāva*, cannot produce a *phala*. Therefore, one has to accept *phala* for *nitya-karmas* also. According to Śaṅkara, *nitya-karmas* also are useful to some extent in removing the obstruction like the *pāpa* of earlier birth. While refuting the above views of the Mīmāṁsakas in the *Gītābhāṣya* (18.6), Saṅkara repeats the same arguments and adds to say that *nitya-karmas* also can result in *puṇya* by which one can reach *puṇyaloka* (heaven, etc.).

In the beginning of the third *brāhmaṇa* of third *adhyāya* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, Śaṅkara states that *nitya-karmas* performed with no aspiration for *phala* give *brahmatva* etc., but if performed without desire they can produce *ātmajñāna*, thus becoming a means to *mokṣa* indirectly. He does not agree with the views of the Mīmāṁsakas who maintain that *nitya-karmas* and *naimittika-karmas* do not have any *phala* of their own, but their performance

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which involves so much of discomfort to the performer, being the result of the sin of the earlier births, removes the same.

There are some thinkers, according to whom *karma*, in association with *jñāna*, is responsible for *mokṣa*. This theory is called *jñāna-karma-samuccayavāda*. This kind of combination may be possible between *karma* and *saguṇabrahmajñāna*. But once it is established that the ultimate truth is *advitīya-brahma* only (non-dualistic absolute) it can be realised only through *jñāna*, which repels *ajñāna*, and there is no scope for the co-existence of *karma* and this type of *jñāna*. Therefore, Śaṅkara refutes vehemently the *samuccayavāda* in almost all his *Bhāṣyas* (beginning of the *Kenopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, and of the *Aitareyopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, at the end of the commentary on *Śīkṣāvallī* of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, in *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya*, 2.11, in the beginning of the third *brāhmaṇa* of third *adhyāya* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣya*, etc.).

As the foregoing discussion goes to show, Śaṅkara while accepting the authority of *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* feels that the two *Mīmāṁsās* cannot be considered as constituting one scripture, because of their differences in some fundamental issues. As he indicates in a very long discussion at the end of the first *brāhmaṇa* of the second *adhyāya* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* the authority of the *karmakāṇḍa* is not affected by the *Upaniṣads* because the former has value in its own sphere, and the *prāmāṇya* of latter begins where that of the former ends.

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20

THE INFLUENCE OF ŚAṄKARA'S WRITINGS ON RĀMĀNUJA

N. S. RĀMĀNUJA TĀTĀCĀRYA

The system of Vedānta based upon the *Upaniṣads* has been formulated by many a great sage like Bādari, Auḍulomi and others; and this we know from references to them in the *Brahma-sūtras*. The texts composed by these, however, are not extant now. The *Brahma-sūtras* composed by Bādarāyaṇa consisting of aphorisms that substantiate the teachings of the *Upaniṣads* have been commented upon by great preceptors who flourished before Śaṅkara. Their works too are not available now. The commentaries of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva on the *Brahma-sūtras* explaining the import of the *Upaniṣads* to be Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita are current now.

In this paper an attempt is made to explain the influence of Śaṅkara's writings upon Rāmānuja.

There are certain Upaniṣadic texts which speak of the difference among the insentient world, the sentient souls, and God.

(1) The text of the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*:

samyuktametat kṣaramakṣaraṁ ca
vyaktāvyaktam-bharate viśvamīśaḥ[1]

makes a clear reference to the three principles of *kṣara*, the world, the *akṣara*, the souls, and God.

(2) Another text of the same *Upaniṣad*:

jñājñau dvau ajau īśanīśau ajā
hyekā bhoktṛ-bhogārthayuktā[2]

refers not only to the above three factors but also to the difference among them. The word '*jña*' stands for God, the omniscient Being. The word '*ajña*' stands for the soul of limited knowledge. The expression '*ajā hi ekā*' refers to *prakṛti* which is insentient and which is different from the former two. The expression '*īśanīśau*' is a Vedic usage with the loss of *savarṇadīrgha*. It stands for *Īśa*, the God, and *anīśa*, the soul which is controlled by God. The

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expression '*bhoktṛ-bhogārthayuktā*' means that *prakṛti* is associated with sound and other factors which are the means to happiness or misery as the case may be in regard to the souls. In this passage the difference between God and soul is emphasised by referring to the former as omniscient and the latter as one with limited knowledge. Further, the distinction between the soul and *prakṛti* too is stated by referring to the former as an experient and the latter as an object of enjoyment.

(3) Yet another text of the same *Upaniṣad*:

kṣaram-pradhānam-amṛtākṣaraṁ haraḥ
kṣarātmānau īśate deva ekaḥ[3]

explains in a different manner the meanings of the terms '*kṣara*' and '*akṣara*' referred to in the passage '*saṁyuktam etat kṣaram-akṣaraṁ ca*' cited above and emphasizes the distinction among God, the soul and *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* or *pradhāna* in view of its nature of undergoing change at every moment is referred to as *kṣara*. The word '*hara*' etymologically means that which experiences the objects of the world and thus stands for the soul. In the expression '*amṛtākṣaram*' the word '*amṛta*' which is an adjective conveys the ground on the basis of which the soul is referred to as *akṣara*. The ground is that the soul in view of its being free from any change (*amṛta*) is *akṣara*. The word '*hara*' conventionally conveys the sense of Rudra; and conventional usage is more powerful than the etymological one. Yet in the complement of the text, '*kṣarātmānau īśate deva ekaḥ*' the word '*ātman*' which stands for the soul is used as explanatory of the meaning of the term '*hara*' found in the previous line. Hence it is ascertained that the conventional meaning of the word '*hara*' is not intended to be conveyed here. In this text too, the distinction between the soul and *prakṛti* is conveyed by referring to the former as free from any change and to the latter as subject to change. In the same way, the distinction, between God on the one hand and the soul and *prakṛti* on the other, is conveyed by referring to the former as the controller of the later.

(4) In the text:

pradhāna-kṣetrajñapatir guṇeśaḥ
saṁsāramokṣasthitibandhahetuḥ[4]

the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* reiterates the three factors of God, soul and *prakṛti*. The terms '*guṇeśaḥ*' conveys God as the controller of three factors of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. God is spoken of as *pati* or the Lord of *prakṛti* (*pradhāna*) and of the soul (*kṣetrajña*). He

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is the cause of both bondage in the form of the experience of transmigratory existence and release from it.

(5) Another hymn of the same *Upaniṣad*:

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte
tayoḥ anyaḥ pippalaṁ svādu atti
anaśnan anyo abhicākaśīti[5]

states that two birds with beautiful wings inseparable from each other reside in one and the same tree — the body. Of these two, one experiences the fruits of its past merits (and demerits) and the other one without experiencing any fruit manifests of its own accord. In this hymn the expression '*dvā suparṇā*' refers to God and the soul and the expression '*samānaṁ vṛkṣam*, the *prakṛti* which has transformed into the body. Further, the soul is said to be dependent upon its past merits and demerits as it is spoken of as experiencing the fruits of the latter, while God is said to be independent of any merit or demerit as He is referred to as a non-experient. The distinction between God and soul has thus been brought out clearly.

In this way there are certain texts which speak of the world and soul as identical with supreme reality and also of the absence of any entity apart from the latter. These texts are: (i) "*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*"[6] (The world given in perception is Brahman indeed.); (ii) "*ayam ātmā brahma*"[7] (This soul is Brahman.); (iii) "*tat tvam asi*"[8] (You are That.); and (iv) "*sadeva saumya idam agra āsīt ekameva advitīyam*"[9] (Oh! gentle one, this world prior to its creation existed as *sat* only which is one only without a second).

Now the question arises as to the mode of reconciling the two sets of Upaniṣadic texts — one speaking of the difference and the other of the non-difference among the world, the soul and God. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*[10] states:

> The texts such as 'This soul in the body being supported by the supreme reality goes to the other world'[11] and the like speak of the difference between the soul and the supreme reality. The texts such as '*tat tvam asi*' and the like refer to the non-difference between the two. It is impossible that there could be difference and non-difference between the two at one and the same time. This, however, is not a defect. Elsewhere it has been proved that the relation between the soul and the supreme reality is similar to the one that exists between

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> the space conditioned by the pot and the space that transcends the pot. Moreover, when the direct knowledge of the true nature of soul as identical with the supreme reality arises from the texts like '*tat tvam asi*', the characteristic of being a transmigratory entity is removed from the soul and the characteristic of being the creator of the world, from God. The entire realm of duality caused by the indeterminable *māyā* is sublated by the valid knowledge of reality. The question of creation of the world and the question of non-creation of only pleasant objects do not have any relevance then. We have often said that transmigratory existence is due to the false identification of the soul with the body-mind complex.

From the above it follows that according to Śaṅkara the identity of the soul with Brahman conveyed by the texts such as '*tat tvam asi*' is real and that the difference between the two is fancied by *avidyā* or *māyā*. The texts that speak of the difference between the two only restate the difference that is fancied.

Rāmānuja in his commentary on the *adhikaraṇa* entitled '*aṁśo nānāvyapadeśāt*'[12] states:

> A two-fold reference to the relation between Brahman and soul is noticed. The difference between the two is set forth in the *Upaniṣads* involving the relation of being a creator and the created, the controller and the controlled, omniscience and of limited knowledge, independence and dependence, purity and impurity, possession of auspicious qualities and the opposite of them, and the characteristic of being a Lord and that of being a subordinate. The texts like '*tat tvam asi*', etc., speak of the identity between the two. In order to maintain these two references to be primary, it is essential to admit that the soul is a part of Brahman. It cannot be said that the reference to the difference between the soul and Brahman can be explained as mere restatement of the difference that is known from perceptual evidence. The fact that the soul is controlled by Brahman and is dependent upon the latter and the difference between the two based upon this position — all these do not come within the range of perception. Hence it should not be said that the *Upaniṣads* which speak of the creation of the world,

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etc., convey only fancied entities as they restate what is known through other *pramāṇas*.

Thus Rāmānuja advocates the view that the difference between the soul and Brahman is real. The soul is a part and also is the body of Brahman. In ordinary experience, the words that are used to signify the body are well-known to convey the one who has the body. Hence the texts like '*tat tvam asi*' etc. which speak of the non-difference between the soul and Brahman convey Brahman as associated with the soul, its body. In other words, they convey the complex of Brahman and the soul to be one. This line of explanation must be extended to in the case of the texts that speak of the non-difference between Brahman and the insentient world.

While commenting upon the aphorism, "*pūrvavadvā*,"[13] Rāmānuja states:

> The insentient object too, like the soul, is a part of Brahman as it is adjectival to the latter being not capable of existing independently. The reference to the non-difference is primary in the sense that it points to a part of the complex whole. The references to the difference also are primary in view of the fact that there is difference between the adjectival feature and the substantive feature. The fact of Brahman being free from any defect is also well taken care of.

In the *Śrībhāṣya* on the '*jijñāsādhikaraṇa*'[14] Rāmānuja states:

> God, soul and the world are set forth in the *Upaniṣads* as different among themselves. Some texts speak of the world and soul on the one hand, and God on the other as related to each other as body and soul and as adjectival and substantive features. Hence there is no conflict in referring to the causal relation between God on the one hand and the soul and the world on the other and at the same time proclaiming the identity between the cause and the effect.

It follows that there is vast difference in the fundamental tenets of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. When such is the case, it may be asked as to how it is possible to maintain the influence of the writings of Śaṅkara upon Rāmānuja. It is answered that in regard to the method of interpretation, Rāmānuja follows the method adopted by Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja's views on Brahman endowed with attributes are precisely the same as those of Śaṅkara.

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The view of the Viśiṣṭādvaitin is: in the expression like 'Caitra knows,' the word 'Caitra' which is significative of the body is known to convey the soul. In the same way, any word which is significative of the sense different from Brahman and which is employed in *śruti* with reference to Brahman is decided to be conveying Brahman having the soul and the insentient world as its body. This position is arrived at on the basis of the teaching of the *antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* according to which the world consisting of the sentient and insentient beings is the body of Brahman. This mode of explanation is taken from the text of Śaṅkara. In his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*tadabhidhyānādeva tu talliṅgāt saḥ*"[15] Śaṅkara states:

> A doubt having arisen as to whether the elements such as *viyat* (*ākāśa*), etc., themselves create their own effects or whether it is the Highest Lord Himself abiding in the elements as their self that creates the various effects after profound reflection, the conclusion of the opponent of Vedānta is that the elements themselves create their own effects. Whence is it so? Because the scriptures declare their independence in that respect thus: '*vāyu* came into being from *ākāśa*, *agni* from *vāyu*'[16] etc. This being the conclusion arrived at by the opponent of Vedānta, it is said: it is the Highest Lord alone who abides in these elements as their self that creates each and every effect after profound reflection. Whence is it so? Because there is an indicatory mark about Him. The scriptures by stating that 'He who abides in the earth, and is within the earth, and who the earth knows not, and whose body is the earth and who controls the earth from within'[17] indicate that the activity of the elements is to be seen only when they are presided over by the Highest Self.

From the above it is clear that according to Śaṅkara, the words like *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, etc., in the texts like '*Vāyu* came into being from *ākāśa*, *agni* from *vāyu*', etc. are significative of Brahman, the Highest Self which has *ākāśa*, etc, as its body and which presides over them. This mode of interpretation found in Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* is adopted by Rāmānuja.

Śaṅkara explains the term '*trilokātmā*' in the *Viṣṇusahasranāma* in a two-fold manner thus: (i) He who is the self of the three worlds by being their controller is *trilokātmā*, or (ii) from whom

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the three worlds do not really differ. Of these, the first interpretation is the basis of Rāmānuja's view.

It is well-known that the section entitled, '*antaryāmyadhikaraṇa*', in the *Brahma-sūtra* discusses the import of the texts that speak of the sentient and the insentient as constituting the body of Brahman. While commenting upon this section, Śaṅkara says:

> That the ability to control is the attribute only of the Highest self, who dwelling in the aggregate of all this varied creation, such as the earth, etc., and in the deity, etc. controls all from within, is reasonably sustainable. Omnipotence too is sustainable in the case of the Highest self alone as it is the cause of all creation.[18]

That Brahman is the *śarīrī* as existing in the sentient and the insentient beings and controlling them from within is clearly explained in the *antaryāmibrāhmaṇa*. The soul is signified by the word '*vijñāna*' in the *kāṇva* recension of the *brāhmaṇa*, while it is signified by the word '*ātman*' in the *mādhyandina* recension. And it is referred to as the body or *śarīra*; and Brahman is referred to as the *śarīrī* or the self of the soul by dwelling in it and controlling it. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, '*śarīraśca ubhaye'pi hi bhedena enamadhīyate*,'[19] also confirms the above view. And this mode of explanation by Śaṅkara is highly favourable to Rāmānuja's view. Further, according to Rāmānuja, Brahman has the sentient and the insentient beings as its body and it is identified as Lord Nārāyaṇa. And, the *antaryāmibrāhmaṇa* confirms this position.

Śaṅkara identifies the *antaryāmin* with Nārāyaṇa when he states in the commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* that the Lord designated as Nārāyaṇa directs the presiding deities of the earth, etc., towards their functions. The text of the *Subālopaniṣad*:

> sa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛto
> divyo deva eko nārāyaṇaḥ

wherein the *antaryāmin* is identified with Nārāyaṇa is the authority for Śaṅkara's view.

While commenting upon the *Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa*,[20] Śaṅkara states:

> It is said that Lord Nārāyaṇa who is the supreme self and the self of all and who is well-known as transcending the undeveloped exists by differentiating Himself in a manifold form. This view is not sought to be rejected by us. It is because in the *Upaniṣads* it is said that the

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> supreme self becomes manifold. Further, propitiation of God with concentrated mind is recommended and this too is not rejected by us, as loving devotion towards God is well-known in the *śruti* and the *smṛti*.

The above observation is highly fovourable to Rāmānuja's view. Śaṅkara holds the view that Lord Nārāyaṇa is well-known in the *Upaniṣads* as the supreme self when he states that Lord Nārāyaṇa is the supreme being by transcending the undeveloped. This reminds one of the statement in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*[21] that the supreme self is higher than the undeveloped and it is the ultimate. And Śaṅkara in his commentary on this passage states that the supreme goal is Lord Viṣṇu designated as Vāsudeva.

While commenting upon the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*prakṛtaitāvattvaṁ hi pratiṣedhati tato bravīti ca bhūyaḥ*"[22] Śaṅkara raises the doubt as to whether the text '*neti neti*' negates the *mūrtaprapañca* and the *amūrtaprapañca*, or Brahman only, or both. The *prima facie* view he places before himself is that it negates both, and his final view is that it negates only the *mūrta-* and *amūrta-prapañca*. In support of his final position he says:

> After expounding with great effort Brahman as the import of the *Upaniṣads* on the basis of the texts such as 'He who realizes Brahman attains that transcendent one,' 'Brahman is real, consciousness and infinite,' and the like no one would seek to negate it. For, as the maxim goes, it is better not to defile one's feet with mud than to defile and then to wash it off.

This very maxim Rāmānuja extends to the case of the negation of the world too. He says:

> It is not proper to hold that the text '*neti neti*' negates the forms presented in Brahman. In that case it would be an instance of the utterance of a confused person. For, no one with a clear understanding would negate what is conveyed in respect of Brahman as its adjectival feature — a fact unknown from any other means of knowledge.[23]

In the same way, according to Śaṅkara Lord Nārāyaṇa is the supreme deity among the conditioned forms of Brahman. The invocatory verse of Śaṅkara's *Gītābhāṣya* runs as follows:

> nārāyaṇaḥ paro'vyaktāt aṇḍamavyaktasambhavam,
> aṇḍasyāntastvime lokāḥ saptadvīpā ca medinī.

Ānandagiri while commenting on this verse states:

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> The word *nara* stands for the group of bodies. And the reflected images of the consciousness in the bodies are known as *nārā*. The substratum of these, their controller and their indwelling spirit is Nārāyaṇa. It is with reference to Him, the *antaryāmibrāhmaṇa* and the Vedic hymn known as *Nārāyaṇasūkta* are being studied. By this the supreme principle which is the import of the *Gītā* is conveyed.

All this is favourable to Rāmānuja's system of Vedānta.

In the *Bhagavad Gītā* the Lord has said that "four types of meritorious people worship Me, Oh, Arjuna: one who is afflicted, one who is desirous of knowledge, one who seeks material prosperity, and the knower of the truth." "Of these, the knower of the truth is the supreme as he is always devoted to Me; I am the most lovable one of the knower of the truth and the latter is the one whom I love most."

> caturvidhāḥ bhajante māṁ narāḥ sukṛtino'rjuna,
> ārto jijñāsuḥ arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha.
> teṣāṁ jñānī nityayuktaḥ ekabhaktiḥ viśiṣyate,
> priyo hi jñānino'tyartham-ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ.[24]

The word 'jñānī' is explained by Śaṅkara as one who knows the true nature of Viṣṇu (*viṣṇoḥ tattvavit*).

In the same chapter the Lord says: Those who worship other Gods with a view to attain their desired ends attain them, as dispensed by Me; those who worship Me attain Me too, besides their desired ends."

> sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ tasyārādhanam īhate,
> labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vihitān hi tān.
> antavattu phalaṁ teṣāṁ tadbhavatyalpamedhasām,
> devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti māmapi.[25]

Śaṅkara while commenting upon these passages states that the Lord expresses his sense of pity upon those who do not worship Him with a view to attain the highest good although the effort involved in the process of worshipping Him and the other Gods is the same. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his commentary *Gūḍhārthadīpikā* states that the effort in the process of worshipping other Gods and the Lord is the same. My devotees, however, would attain the highest human end, namely, liberation. The devotees of other Gods attain their desired ends, but they would experience transmigratory existence. Hence let the afflicted, the seekers after knowledge and of material prosperity resort to Me and at-

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tain easily the highest human end. This is the considered view of the Lord, the most compassionate one.

In his commentary on the *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, Śaṅkara has shown the supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu over the other Gods. (1) The word '*sarvalokamaheśvara*' is explained as one who is supreme by being the Lord of Brahmā and others who control the Lord. (2) The word '*arcita*' is explained as one who is worshipped by Lord Brahmā and others that are worshipped by the entire world. (3) The word '*kathita*' is explained thus: it is Lord Viṣṇu whom the *Vedas* speak as the supreme; or, He is one who is spoken of by all the *Vedas*. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* states that the supreme truth is proclaimed by all the *Vedas*. To the question as to what is that supreme truth, the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* states that it is higher than the senses, their objects, the mind and the intellect. It is higher than the undeveloped. There is nothing higher than it. And the Lord who is proclaimed thus is *Kathita*. (4) *vihāyasagatiḥ*: He whose abode is in the etheric region. He who is desirous of release pursues the path of devotion or *prapatti*. He reaches the world of Vaikuṇṭha through the path of Gods. There he worships the Lord Vāsudeva, who is in the couch of Ādiśeṣa. He is being asked by the Lord to reveal his identity. He replies that he was immersed in the ocean of transmigration from time immemorial and by the grace of God he has reached this world of Vaikuṇṭha and has attained the full manifestation of his attributive consciousness. The Lord directs him to stay there itself and to have the experience similar to that of the eternally released souls. He stays there, worships God and never returns to earth. This is the view of Rāmānuja and this is based on the authority of the section of the *Upaniṣad* entitled *paryaṅkavidyā*. This subject has been set forth by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, '*upapannaḥ tallakṣaṇārthopapatteḥ*':

> The journey along the path of Gods is significant. It is discernible in the case of meditation upon the conditioned Brahman as in the case of *paryaṅkavidyā*. Therein, ascending the couch, having conversation with Brahman who is seated on the couch and experiencing special smell, etc., which depend on the soul attaining a different place — all these are mentioned in the scriptures.[26]

(5) The word '*atula*' is explained in the sense that the Lord is excelled by none and equalled by few on the basis of the *Śvetāśvatara* text, 'There is nothing like Him,' and on the basis of the

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Gītā text, 'There is none equal to Him and there is no question of his being excelled by someone.' (6) *anuttamaḥ* — He who is excelled by none. (7) *padmanābhaḥ* — He who has in his navel the lotus that is the cause of the entire world. (8) *muktānām paramā gatiḥ* — He who is the ultimate goal of the liberated souls. Those who have reached Him never experience transmigration. (9) *viśiṣṭaḥ* — He who excels everything. (10) *śubhekṣaṇaḥ* — He whose gracious look grants spiritual felicity to those who seek after release, objects of enjoyment to those who desire material prosperity, purifies the sinful, dispels all doubts, and removes all *karma*. (11) *satāṁ gatiḥ* — He who is the only resort of those who desire liberation. (12) *sukhadaḥ* — He who grants happiness in the form of liberation to the devotees. (13) *sulabhaḥ* — He who is attained easily by the offering of leaves, flowers, fruits, etc. out of devotion. (14) *suvrataḥ* — He who has a vow that is beneficial to all. Śrī Rāma's statement in the *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa*: "This is my vow to offer protection on all grounds to one who resorts to me once with a sincere feeling that 'I am your servant'." (15) *stavyaḥ* — He who is praised by everyone and who does not praise anyone. These and other similar statements of Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣyas* have influenced Rāmānuja.

NOTES

Abbreviations

Bh.G.	— *Bhagavadgītā*
Bṛh. Up.	— *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*
BS	— *Brahma-sūtra*
Chānd. Up.	— *Chāndogyopaniṣad*
Kaṭh. Up.	— *Kaṭhopaniṣad*
Māṇḍ. Up.	— *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad*
Śvet. Up.	— *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*
Taitt. Up.	— *Taittirīyopaniṣad*

1. *Śvet. Up.*, 1.8.
2. *Ibid.*, 1.9.
3. *Ibid.*, 1.10.
4. *Ibid.*, 6.16.
5. *Ibid.*, 4.6.
6. *Chānd. Up.*, 3.14.1.
7. *Māṇḍ. Up.*, 2.
8. *Chānd. Up.*, 6.8.7.
9. *Ibid.*, 6.2.1.
10. *BS*, 2.1.22.
11. *Bṛh. Up.*, 4.3.35.
12. *BS*, 2.3.7.
13. *Ibid.*, 3.2.8.
14. *Ibid.*, 1.1.1.
15. *Ibid.*, 2.3.13.
16. *Taitt. Up.*, 2.1.1.

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17. *Bṛh. Up.*, 3.7.3.
18. *BS*, 1.2.18.
19. *Ibid.*, 1.2.20.
20. *Ibid.*, 2.2.42.
21. *Kaṭh. Up.*, 3.10ff.
22. *BS*, 3.2.22.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Bh.G.*, 7.16-17.
25. *Ibid.*, 7.22-23.
26. *BS*, 3.3.30.

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21

ADVAITA VEDĀNTA AND WESTERN ABSOLUTE IDEALISM

T. L. S. SPRIGGE

I

The great message of spiritual monism and in particular of Advaita Vedānta, has been that reality is fundamentally one, and that plurality is a mere appearance. This oneness of reality cannot be interpreted in merely physical terms as an assertion that everything belongs to a common space and time. Rather is the universe in its true being asserted to be a unitary spiritual reality which somehow feels its own being and feels it as good. And each finite individual is just one expression of that one unitary spiritual reality which lies at the heart of him and only properly understands things and behaves appropriately in the world when he recognizes the fundamental sameness of the spiritual reality which is the essence both of his own being and of all other conscious and even apparently unconscious beings. This great doctrine supplies a foundation for ethics which is intuitively appealing and rationally well grounded. The bad man fails to see the fundamental sameness of the other with himself; the good man recognizes himself again in all other subjects and acts accordingly.

This great message also holds out a promise of redemption to suffering humanity. Realize that what you most truly are is the one great reality which appears in all things and concern over your own personal fate will diminish, so that you will be able to rejoice in the life of others as much as in your own and not fear for your own death unduly. And insofar as at the level of appearance you remain an individual you can find peace by identifying yourself with the one great reality which is appearing in you, rather than with the factors which seem to separate you off from other beings.

Anyone who becomes convineed that the truth lies along these lines will recognize the great Hindu scriptures, above all the

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Upaniṣads, as the most inspiring expression of them. And he will recognize that at a philosophical level Indian traditional philosophy, in its Vedānta forms, has been the preeminent exploration of their intellectual basis. These themes have surfaced in Western philosophy too, but they have never entered deeply into the culture of the West as they have in India. Everyone therefore who comes to think and feel in this way must look to India as the great womb of these ideas.

The purpose of this present paper, however, is to sketch a pattern of support for a spiritual monism in many ways akin to Advaita which I believe can be established on the basis of considerations which have been developed in Western philosophy. Such a viewpoint is certainly not typical of current thinking in the Western tradition, but this, I suggest, is for cultural reasons which do not reflect upon its logical cogency. Advaitins must judge for themselves how far it is essentially the same doctrine as theirs, but surely it has at the least an instructive kinship to it. I shall say something about this as I go on.

There are eight great theses which taken together constitute the essence of this spiritual monism or monistic idealism.

1. There is no reality except consciousness.

2. Each ordinary finite mode of consciousness seems to confront a not-Self which is other than itself.

3. Each ordinary finite mode of consciousness is an element in a universal consciousness.

4. The physical world of daily life is the way in which the total consciousnesss, including all finite consciousness in its own unity, appears to the included finite consciousnesses.

5. There is an element of illusion in the sense of separateness from other beings which is an essential element of ordinary finite life.

6. The total consciousness of the universe exemplifies in a supreme degree an essence which is exemplified in a lesser degree by every mode of finite consciousness which it includes.

7. The highest forms of life involve a partial dissolution of the illusion of our absolute separateness from one another.

8. The total consciousness of the universe is eternal and unchanging.

1. *There is no reality except consciousness*

Whenever one really brings home to oneself the nature of what one is believing to exist when one has any thoughts about

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how things are, it is always either explicitly some being's state of consciousness or a reality which is characterised by properties which cannot coherently be conceived as existing in the absence of consciousness.

When I think about what it is like to be another person doing something or other I am trying to imagine their state of consciousness. Thus if my wife is on holiday in some place to which I have never been, and I try to imagine her state of consciousness on holiday, I have to use what materials I have to imagine the place she is visiting and then think of that place presenting itself to someone with her particular interests, forms of appreciation etc. May be I can form some conception which may come fairly near the truth, or maybe I cannot. That makes little difference to the point that what I am doing is imagining a certain form of consciousness.

Now suppose that I try to imagine the place she is visiting, rather than her experiences of it. To a great extent I must imagine the same thing. I have to imagine the kind of landscape which there is in that country, the kind of activities one would see people engaged in if one was there, the sounds, the smells and so forth. What differentiates this from imagining my wife's experience of the place? Well, I have to keep out of the content of what I am imagining any special emphasis upon the kinds of things which I think would especially attract her attention, and suppress any suggestion of the personal feelings and verbal thoughts which these sights, sound, smells etc. would arouse in her. But I can only do this by substituting for the imagination of her special way of experiencing it, some other special way of experiencing it. Probably I simply try to imagine what I would experience if I were there. But suppose I am determined to imagine the place itself, not the experiences it would give me or anyone else. Well, in the end I can only do this by thinking of it as being presented to a kind of consciousness which I think of as of having a peculiarly objective view of things. But that is just one particular kind of consciousness, along with others. In short, whenever you imagine a physical state of affairs of any sort, you have to imagine it as presented to some particular sort of experiencing subject. And what you are imagining is really the form of consciousness constituted by the perception of that physical scene by a mind of that particular sort.

Mental reality and physical reality cover most of what we

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ever think about. So if it is true that thinking about mental reality and thinking about physical reality is always really thinking about some form of consciousness, it looks as though we cannot think about much which does not involve consciousness. However, realities are sometimes supposed to exist which are neither physical nor mental. The main example consists of various so-called abstract objects like numbers.

Is it perhaps true that the mathematician who thinks about numbers is thinking about something which does not involve consciousness in its nature? Of course, when he thinks about numbers he himself is conscious, but that is not to the point. The question is whether his subject matter involves a reference to consciousness. Well, if he really tries to cash in his imagination what the object of his thought is it seems to me that he is thinking of certain highly abstract features which can be present in a large number of different sorts of concrete situation. To take the simplest example: Thinking of the fact that seven plus five equals twelve seems to be attending to some common feature present in all cases where a group of five objects is put together with a group of seven objects to form a larger group and noting that this common feature leads to another common feature, that of being a group of twelve. In short he is thinking about certain abstract features of the world of countable objects. The question then arises whether a world of countable objects can be imagined which does not involve consciousness. Well, the most obviously countable objects are physical ones, and we have already contended that the physical cannot be conceived as distinct from someone's awareness of it. Perhaps one can count minds too, but that does not take us away from consciousness. And if one says that one can count abstract objects, such as numbers themselves, then I think this is just a higher level abstraction which must be grounded in the realities of the physical or the mental world.

But what of various social realities — the state, the law, political constitutions, businesses and limited companies? Well, surely in the end if one tries to bring home to oneself what the existence of these amounts to, it is always some complex fact of which the constituents are conscious human beings dealing with each other in a physical world. Nothing which occurs in a social system can be imagined except either in terms what it would present to the observation of someone standing outside the system and looking on at it, or in terms of what is experienced by those

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involved in it.

Thus it seems that if one really tries to imagine the nature of any reality in the existence of which one believes, one can only do so by imagining various different forms of consciousness. If there is anything besides consciousness it cannot be imagined. But what right have we to say that there is anything quite different from anything we can imagine? If we can imagine no reality except consciousness and its contents, and never (when we properly look into the matter) think in terms of their being anything else, is not the very idea of a reality outside consciousness best dismissed as meaningless?

To this conclusion there are a number of usual objections. First, it will be said that after all thinking and imagining are not the same thing. We can think about many things in a perfectly rational way without imagining them, and it may well be that some of the things of which we think cannot be imagined at all. And secondly it may be suggested that there is some confusion in our account of imagining. When you imagine something, you do in fact have to present the thing imagined to yourself in a certain subjective light, but that subjective light is not a part of what you are imagining, simply an aspect of the way in which you imagine it. When you see an object you do not see your own seeing of it, and when you imagine it you are not imagining your own imagining of it. Perhaps when you imagine it you have to imagine it seen from a certain position relative to it, and perhaps you have to imagine it bathed in certain emotional colours stemming from your own concerns. But this perspectival and emotional quality belongs to your imagery rather than to that which your imagery is depicting for you. If I imagine an absent face my image of it may be of a rather vague and wavering sort, but I am not imagining the face itself as being vague and wavering.

Let us take these two objections in turn.

(i) First, the objection that one can think of something without imagining it.

To imagine something (I suggest) is to have imagery in your mind which has characteristics you attribute to a reality existing beyond you. To imagine a cat you must have an image in your mind which has cat-like features and think of those features as pertaining to a reality beyond you. You do not have to ascribe every feature of your image to the reality beyond, only those which are serving to depict it to you. Thus if you imagine some-

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thing of a certain shape, you can discount the colour of your imagery as not being one of the characteristics of your imagery which is being used to specify the object.

Now you can think about things without imagining them inasmuch as sequences of verbal symbolism can run through your mind which adjusts your behaviour appropriately to the reality in the midst of which you live. But surely you do not know in any deep way what you are thinking about unless you can cash your thoughts in some kind of imagination of it. You do not really know what democracy is unless you can imagine representative situations in the pervasive occurrence of which democracy consists. So long as you cannot cash your thoughts in some kind of imagination you really do not know their content. If it is quite impossible to imagine the things your words refer to, these are simply a kind of verbal fiction, reference to which serves as a more or less effective instrument for dealing with reality without giving real insight into any feature of reality. (Direct experience of something doubtless gives you a still better grasp of the sense of words which refer to it, but I am assuming that what can be directly experienced can also be imagined, so that my formula implicitly covers this.)

However, I would qualify this by saying that there are many cases where we must be satisfied with what I could call indirect imagination. Suppose you can imagine a certain relationship which can hold between things, inasmuch as you can imagine cases of the relation holding and can give special attention to the relation. For example, you can imagine the relation of 'being larger than' because you can imagine many cases of X being larger than Y, and note the common relation. Suppose now that you come to an object W such that you cannot directly imagine anything larger than W. You can still do what I would call indirectly imagining it. For you can specify a type of object X as having the feature 'being larger than W'. And although, ex hypothesi, you cannot directly imagine this you have specified it in imaginable terms. And that is what I mean by 'indirectly' imagining something.

That is not a serious example because there cannot be an object such that you could not directly imagine a larger. Consider then a better example. You can imagine the way in which a square stands to a cube. It stands in the relation of being one of the equal sized surfaces of it. But can you imagine a shape to which

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a cube stands in this same relation, in short a four dimensional continuation of the series, square, cube,...? Surely not. But you can indirectly imagine it by specifying imaginable relations in which it stands to imaginable things.

There are many things of which we can form an adequate conception by such indirect imagination. We thereby give ourselves an indirect sense of what they are or would be like, and it is reasonable to be content with that. True, if we could imagine things more fully we might find that some of the things we can only imagine indirectly are intrinsically impossible. Nonetheless we do have some intuitive idea of what they would be like. They are not mere creatures of language of which we cannot give ourselves any real idea.

An example of especial importance is this. Your consciousness stands in a certain relation to all your more passing mental states. You can both experience and imagine the way in which it stands to them, or so I suggest. But can you imagine a consciousness which stands to each of our consciousness as they stand to their own mental states? Perhaps not directly. But you can imagine it indirectly. For you can directly imagine the relation in which your own mental states stand to your own consciousness, and then specify this more comprehensive consciousness as standing in that same relation to each of our finite consciousness. In doing so you have specified what the Absolute is, as I understand it, in a manner which allows you to imagine it indirectly though not directly.

But while you can imagine a four dimensional space indirectly and likewise the Absolute I claim that you can no more indirectly imagine a reality quite separated from consciousness than you can directly imagine it. To indirectly imagine a thing quite separated from consciousness one would have to display to one's direct imagination a relation holding between imagined things and such that to think of something standing in that relation to something else which is directly or indirectly imaginable would be to think of it as quite separated from consciousness. And I think this can be shown to be out of the question though I cannot argue the point further here. I conclude that though there are things not directly imaginable of which one can give oneself an intuitive sense which makes them more than verbal fictions, this must be by what I call indirect imagination of them and that even indirect imagination of a reality quite separated from cons-

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ciousness is out of the question. Such reality therefore is merely a useful verbal fiction.

(ii) The other objection I mentioned to my way of looking at it was this. Cannot one regard what seems subjective in the image one has of anything of which one thinks as in many cases not part of what one ascribes to the thing imagined as part of its character, but as merely a feature of the imagery by which one thinks of it? To this I reply briefly as follows. I agree that there is much in one's imagery which one does not need to ascribe to what one is imagining. But in order to imagine a reality as lacking certain features it is required, not just that you discount certain parts of your imagery, but that you take certain features of your imagery as a positive indication of what a reality lacking those features would be like. To imagine a man without socks on, it's not enough that your image of him lacks socks. You have got to use the absence of socks in your imagery as a symbol of the absence of socks on the part of the man you are imagining. And this is what you cannot do with the presence of subject-implying features. You can find nothing in your imagery which is fit to represent an apartness from all subjectivity on the part of what you use it to imagine. So you cannot imagine anything physical, or anything else, existing in the absence of consciousness. That means you do not really know what you are talking about when you talk about such a thing. It is just a convenient verbal fiction.

My conclusion is that only those views of the world for which consciousness of various kinds and its contents are the sole reality are serious candidates for ultimate metaphysical truth. Of course, I have had to go through these arguments with appalling speed, and what I have said can only count as a gesture towards a full argument. But at any rate reasons of this sort persuade me that there is no reality besides consciousness and its contents. To think of their being anything else is to think something which cannot in the end be coherently thought and therefore can have little claim to give the truth about the world.

2. *Each ordinary finite mode of consciousness seems to confront a not-self which is other than itself.*

It is an obvious part of our experience that each of us is aware of himself as confronted with things other than himself with which he has to cope in order to survive in an acceptable way. I do not merely experience my own self and its states; rather is the unit of experience a totality which includes both self

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and not-self, the latter consisting primarily in the presented physical world. And although the idealist conclusions we have just reached show that this not-self cannot really exist except within a unit of experience in which it confronts a self, it is a part of our ordinary way of being in the world that the not-self we directly confront seems to be only a part of a larger not-self which extends beyond our direct experience.

Since our experience is of a self confronting a not-self, and the self belongs to what is being experienced just as much as does the not-self, it seems that it cannot be regarded as that which ultimately has the experience. What then does *have* the experience, what is its ultimate subject? An initially promising answer is that the true subject is no other than the total experience, that it is a self-experiencing unit of consciousness which incudes both a self and a not-self aspect, neither of which can exist apart from the other. What is distinctive about the self is that the totality which includes it somehow identifies itself especially with this particular aspect of itself, and that it is lived through rather than presented as an object as is the not-self which is experienced as being directed upon. However, we will be seeing that in a deeper sense it is the one universal consciousness of which both your personal self and the not-self it confronts are cognized contents.

3. *Each ordinary finite mode of consciousness is an element in a universal consciousness.*

If in ultimate truth there is nothing but consciousness, then the normal assumptions as to how it is that we have a common world in which we can inter-act with each other cannot do justice to the real nature of the relations which hold between us. For the normal assumption is that you and I live in a common space and time and that the fact that we can interact rests upon this. Indeed all our ordinary conceptions of the various ways in which one human being can stand to another presuppose relations of a spatial and temporal kind. Certainly there is much more to most of these relationships than mere adjacency or distance in space and time, but they all presuppose forms of physical contact which require presence in the same space and time. This is obviously true of such relationships as that of parent and child, brother and sister, and blood relationships in general. But it is equally true of the whole range of our social relationships as we ordinarily conceive them, such as relations of friendship or of employer and employee or of common citizenship of the same country. These

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and all other human relationships presuppose physical relationships between us occurring within a common space and time.

However, consciousness, being non-physical, is not in space (I leave aside for the moment the question of time). It seems to follow that qua consciousnesses we are not in any real spatial relationship to one another. The spatial relations which are so important for there to be any transactions between us are relations only between our bodies (our brains, of course, included). There is nothing problematic about this if we can assume that there is some special relationship in which one's consciousness stands to one's brain and body. For then one can say that I have, even qua consciousness, a kind of indirect spatial relation to you via the spatial relations between our bodies and that the spatial relations between our two physical organisms are sufficient to set our consciousnesses in social relations to each other. But if in the end there is, as I have argued, nothing but consciousness then that cannot do as a final account of how we really stand to each other. For it is more correct to say that space exists within our consciousnesses than that our consciousnesses exist in space. Each ordinary finite consciousness divides into a self and a not-self, and the space with which we are so familiar is a feature of our presented not-self.

But that seems to leave us quite separate from each other, for you confront your space and I confront my space, and we cannot as consciousnesses figure in each other's spaces. True, when you alter things within your space, corresponding changes occur in my space. All the same, if a physical world which is something other than a presentation to consciousness is denied, then in ultimate truth there is no common physical container to which we all belong.

Yet there must be some single world of which we are all components. Unless there is some larger whole of which we are all elements we are utterly separate from each other. For, as I see it a relation between two or more things always consists in the fact that they go together, perhaps with other things, to constitute some larger whole. [There are some standard but rather superficial objections to this claim to which I reply in my *The Vindication of Absolute Idealism*, Chapter 5.] Normally we think of that larger whole in mainly spatial terms. And insofar as we are concerned with the relations which link different things in the given not-self of one particular consciousness that account does

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well enough. The relations between two visible objects which I see at one time are indeed mainly spatial, for all the things I see at once are elements in one larger given visible spatial whole. But when we are considering relations between distinct consciousnesses, or between things presented to different consciousnesses, a spatial conception of the way they are related will not do. For spatial relations can only exist within what is presented to a single consciousness, not between different consciousnesses. So the spatial relation in which you and I as consciousnesses seem to stand to each other must be a kind of symbolic transcript of a non-spatial relation, and this non-spatial relation must turn on the fact that we are elements together in a non-spatial whole.

But it seems inconceivable that a whole whose elements are our individual consciousnesses could be anything other than a more comprehensive consciousness. It follows that since the ultimate units of existence are iunumerable finite centres of consciousness, and since space only exists within these finite centres and not between them, all finite centres of consciousness must be aspects of a single super-consciousness. This super-consciousness is what absolute idealists call the Absolute and perhaps it can be regarded as one way of conceiving Brahman.

At its simplest, my argument might be put like this. Nothing exists except what is psychical. Psychical elements can only be related to each other as aspects of a consciousness which includes both. People do not realize this because they vaguely think of psychical elements as existing in space. However, once you do realize it you will see that the home in which all psychical elements must belong, in order that they can relate to each other, must be a psychical whole, and this can only be a super-consciousness. It can thus be demonstrated that we are each of us simply different aspects of one infinite consciousness which is the universe as it really is.

I speak boldly of demonstration and I do indeed think the point is demonstrable. However, in the interests of brevity I have simplified a number of points which would have to be made more fully to produce a proper demonstration (such as is presented in my book cited above).

I am not quite clear to what extent Śaṅkara or other Vedāntins employ any similar argument to this in order to demonstrate that we are all components of or manifestations of one single universal consciousness. Certainly Śaṅkara seems to appeal to the

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unity of the Absolute to explain the fact that we share a common apparent physical world. If this is not quite the same point, it is very close to it.

It is worth noting that the Sāṅkhya-Yoga school effectively accepts a good deal of the argument I have deployed. For, as I understand it, this school holds that the relations between different consciousness are only via their embodiment in organisms which exist in a common space. Once we are liberated from the physical world, we move into a state of complete isolation one from another. And I think that would indeed be bound to be the case if there were no Absolute Consciousness. Without it, finite consciousnesses which are not physically embodied could only exist in utter isolation from one another and must therefore do so in the state of liberation. However, both Advaita Vedānta and the absolute idealism to which I am committed differ from this school in claiming that the physical world cannot be the true explanation of how we relate to each other even in our ordinary embodied form. For the physical (as we see it) only exists either as a presentation within one finite centre, or as a symbolic transcript of the real non-physical relations which hold between centres. Thus either we are utterly separate from one another, not only when liberated, but even now, or alternatively we are related to each other both now and when liberated, (if indeed there is such a thing as liberation) in virtue of being aspects of one single unitary consciousness.

4. *The physical world of daily life is the way in which the total consciousness, including all finite consciousnesses in its own unity, appears to the included finite consciousnesses.*

Let me try to make it a little clearer just what becomes of the physical world of daily life on this view. If by the physical world one means the world in very much the character it presents itself to our senses, then it only exists as a presentation to our finite consciousnesses. Some of it is presented in the sense that it is perceived, while the parts of it which are not perceived are there only in the sense that we have to think of them as being there for ordinary practical purposes, and in order to provide standard explanations of our perceptions. It so happens that the world which exists as a presentation for each of us corresponds sufficiently to what exists as a presentation to another that we can treat them as the same world for all ordinary purposes.

However, by the physical world may be meant, not this

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directly presented world, which really only exists within centres and cannot therefore be that in virtue of which they can relate to each other, but some underlying reality which explains our perceptions in a deeper way. Understood in this way the physical world simply is the infinite Absolute Consciousness. That absolute consciousness cannot, as I see it, be a completely undifferentiated plenum, but must be a genuine many united in a genuine one. It must be a self-experiencing unity of consciousness which includes innumerable finite centres of consciousness which seem distinct to themselves but are really simply partial aspects of its ultimate unity. And the reality corresponding to the apparent structure of the physical world must be the complicated way in which these finite centres stand to each other within the Absolute Consciousness.

So in learning about the physical world one is gaining a sense of the real structure of the Absolute. But that structure as it really exists is not spatial or temporal, but the pattern of the possibilities of influence and communication between the innumerable finite centres of consciousness into which the Absolute is articulated. If I fly from Britain to India I, as one centre of consciousness, enter into closer relations of actual or possible communication than hitherto with certain other centres of consciousness. Physically that is represented as my being nearer to them in space, but the real truth of the matter is the greater directness of mutual influence and communication which then exists between us in virtue of the way in which the Absolute feels us together. And when I walk towards a tree, then what is really happening is that my consciousness is entering into closer communication with the low level centres of consciousness which constitute in itself of the atoms which make up the tree.

These two ways in which one can think of the physical world may be expressed in terms of Śaṅkara's much used analogy of the rope which appears as a snake. The physical world of daily life is like the snake, something which only exists as a presentation. But it is the presentation of a reality, and as Śaṅkara conceives it that reality is Brahman, which is here appearing to itself in a false form under the influence of nescience. My own account echoes this in that the phenomenal world is the appearance, like the snake, of a Reality which is in truth the universal consciousness appearing to itself in spatial form. When perhaps absolute idealism of the kind I support differs from Śaṅkara and Advaita Vedānta is

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in insisting that the Absolute must have some kind of internal structure and differentiation which explains how it can thus appear. For that seems to be denied in such statements of Śaṅkara as that 'the Absolute is an unbroken, homogeneous mass of Consciousness, like a lump of salt.' However that internal structure and differentiation is quite compatible with there being an over all unity so that it is much more truly one and intensively experienced by itself as such than it is a many.

5. *There is an element of illusion in the sense of separateness from other beings which is an essential element of ordinary finite life.*

6. *The total consciousness of the universe exemplifies in a supreme degree an essence wich is exemplified in a lesser degree by every mode of finite consciousness which it includes.*

It follows that there is a srrong element of illusion in the ordinary sense we have of ourselves as separate from other people, or indeed from animals, or even nature at large. The philosophy I have been describing fully endorses the 'Thou are that' principle, that we are all ultimately one through the identity of each with the one Absolute. I cannot but help as a general rule being very pleased when something terrible happens that I was not myself involved in it. The suffering of other people does not matter to me as does my own. But in drawing this great boundary between myself and other people I am a victim of an illusion. The features of an experience which I think of as making it mine are really features of every experience which occurs. In the deepest sense there is but one I which has every experience. To the extent that one realizes this one will move to a more unselfish mode of life than the normal. Of course, what is required is not merely intellectual assent to this truth but its deep intuitive grasp. And that intuitive grasp can only come to a limited extent, if at all, from reasoning. It must arise from some deeper way in which one has developed spiritually. And I cannot claim for myself much of the intuitive sensitivity to this truth required of a morally developed person. As Hinduism sees it this is primarily due to the load of Karma with which I am born, and even without belief in reincarnation one can see it as due to a less individuated form of Karma which dogs the human race as a whole.

The sense in which you and I are at a deep level one is twofold. On the one hand our consciousnesses, though they seem separate to each other, are experienced by a higher consciousness

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in unity. Just as my individual sensations are synthesised to form my single consciousness, so our total experiences are synthesised by the Absolute to form its single consciousness.

But there is another sense in which you and I are one. There is a certain essence of I-ness present in each of us (something which taken broadly enough is present in every finite centre of experience and is thus found throughout reality, though it is more developed in 'higher' sorts of centres such as those of man and beast and perhaps in its highest form in the over all consciousness of the Absolute). Now when I ask myself what I most truly am and what it is for an experience to be mine, I really mean that it has this quality of first-personhood something of which I do not really grasp the equal presence in the experience of others. If I did, I would see that really that other person's experience is my own. For it is the same essence of I-ness which is at the core of their experiences as is at the core of mine. And selfishness comes from not recognizing this.

Thus I am one with others both as being aspects of the single absolute consciousness and as being pervaded by the same essenoe of I-ness which qualifies the Absolute as a whole and pervades its every aspect. Still, there is after all some sense in which we are distinct selves, and we must now consider how our monism can best interpret this.

What then is a finite self? My answer is that it is a certain sort of universal. The true particulars of the world are on the one hand momentary centres of experience, such as the total experience you are having at this very moment, and on the other hand the one great particular which is the Universe or Absolute (and this is a universal as well as a particular inasmuch as it is not merely the totality of all things but also immanent in each distinguishable thing in such a way that it may be said to make it what it is). But what we mean by a finite self, considered as something which exists through time, is not one of these. Rather is it something supposed to be common to each member of a temporal series of experiences (more particularly to their self as opposed to not-self aspects). In my view what I, in the sense in which I am to be distinguished from you, am is a specific version of the generic form or universal consciousness. Consciousness is a generic universal which can take on an infinitude of distinct forms just as colour is a generic universal which can be realized in a spectrum of different distinct colour qualities. To be mine, in a

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restrictive sense, is to be an experience which has special personal tinge which my experiences have as a result of my special historical circumstances. Actually this is not quite enough. It also has to be the case that they are dynamically connected in certain special ways with my present centre of consciousness, that which calls them mine. So what I am is a specific form of consciousness unfolding in a series of dynamically connected momentary experiences, and you are another specific form of consciousness unfolding in a distinct such series.

Thus there is a real contrast between different people. But this contrast is much less than we ordinarily think. For each specific form of consciousness is just one version of the generic form of consciousness, and it is more appropriate in the end to emphasise the sameness of the sheer consciousness which exists in each of us than the distinction between the different forms it has taken; for in the end the identity is far more fundamental than the difference. And in addition to this we are one, in the sense that the special so to speak tinges which distinguish the consciousnesses of different finite beings are all experienced by the Absolute as components in its own total form of consciousness.

The supreme instance of the essence of consciousness of which each of us is one finite actualisation is the Absolute itself. For in order to fulfil its basic core nature it has taken on all the possible differentiations of which that nature is capable and united them in a single maximally rich form of consciousness. It is the actualisation of a single unitary essence which combines in itself the whole diversity of forms which finite consciousess has (or, I suspect, could have) taken.

This account in many respects echoes that of Advaita, but perhaps puts more stress on the value to the Absolute of that plurality of forms into which it seems to differentiate itself in order to attain a richer form for its own unitary being

7. *The highest forms of life involve a partial dissolution of the illusion of our absolute separateness from one another.*

The sense of our personal distinctness from each other is not wholly bad and not wholly illusory. The Absolute really is differentiated into distinct conscious beings in the sense that it includes components each of which is a more specific version of its basic essence, and whose existence enriches its own over all essence. (I am making a distinction similar to Whitehead's between the underlying and the subsequent nature of God. There is the

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pure essence of absolute consciousness and there is the fullness of consciousness required in order that pure essence shall be exemplified in the completest possible version.) On the other hand the difference between your having a certain experience and my having a certain experience is not of the fundamental nature we ordinarily think it. Having grasped that an experience of a certain sort has taken place, there is not some further fact to be grasped to the effect that it is you rather than I who has had that experience. What distinguishes your experiences from mine is not that they have a different subject but that their character reflects a different social context. Selfishness turns on thinking of other people's experiences as not having the same kind of reality as one's own do. The fact that another is going to suffer is only registered as a kind of shadowy fact compared with the fact that I am going to suffer. I do not think of it as having the same burning quality of I-ness as my own experiences do. Once realize that the first personal quality of experience which I think marks them as mine is present as fully in the experience of others as in my own and I cannot be indifferent to the experiences of others. True, there will always be a difference between thought about an absent experience and an experience which is immediately present to the thought itself. But so far as experiences which are not immediately present to the thought itself go, the more I register the true character of reality, it will make less and less difference whether it is my own past and future experience, or the experience of another that is in question. The same essential Absolute is both present in and includes each of our experiences and the higher forms of human life turn on a deep feeling for this truth.

8. *The total consciousness of the universe is eternal and unchanging.*

Advaita Vedānta insists on the unreality of becoming and on the proposition that genuine reality must consist in a static eternal form of being.

Such a proposition risks becoming a mere verbal definition of what real means. Clearly if you mean by 'real' something which does not change, then the ordinary things of the world are not real. But to say this is not to say anything about them which is not obvious to the most common sense and unspiritual picture of reality. At the level of ordinary thought we think trees are perfectly real for as they last, in spite of the fact that they are continually changing and do not last for ever. If there is an un-

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changing more substantial reality underlying all phenomena, it is not clear why its unchangingness makes it more real than the changing things of which it forms the foundation. Saying that it is real, and that the changing things are not, must be something more than a repetition of the fact the one does not change, and lasts fo ever, while that the others change and perish, if it is going to amount to very much. Or so at least it seems to me.

If the changing is to be condemned as unreal, it must be because there is something incoherent in the very idea of change, on the basis of which it can be condemned as illusion. And even if we can establish the incoherence of some particular conception of change, it remains possible that reality is better conceived as changing, in a way to which that conception does not do justice, than as unchanging. It is thus that philosophers like Bergson and William James insist that the flux is real although mathematical concepts are not adequate to deal with it.

If time and change are to be ultimately unreal, it must be by establishing that anything approaching our ordinary notion of them is incoherent, and by providing a coherent conception of a world which is not temporal in the ordinary sense but appears to be such to its inhabitants. I believe that this can be done, though I cannot develop the theme adequately here.

The best way of bringing out the incoherence of our ordinary notion of change and time is to consider the attitude we have towards the past. When an event is over, or when a thing has ceased to be, we still think that there is a truth to the effect that the event occurred or that the thing once existed. Ordinary thought can never accept the idea that the past is so absolutely nothing that there is no definite truth about it. It is sure that once I have existed and had certain experiences, it will remain eternally true that I did so. And the holding of that truth cannot be identified with the fact that anyone remembers me or is in a position to say that I had those experiences. For it will still be true that I did exist and had the experiences even when a time comes when no one knows that fact. Historians who cannot discover the answer to some historical riddle cannot doubt that there is an actual fact of the matter. So we all assume that there is a definite truth about every detail of what happened in the past.

But when we ask how there can be such a truth, we are stumped. What can make one proposition about the past true,

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and another false, if the past is essentially nothing? We must think of the past as having some kind of being if there is to be a truth about it. Yet common sense can give no adequate account of what form of being the past possesses. It will not do to say that the past leaves a kind of shadow of itself and that propositions about the past are true because they correctly report the character of these shadows. For the shadows are only worth anything if they are shadows of a real past, and it is the status of that real past which is our problem.

The fact that we must both think of the past as having a kind of being, and must also treat it as simply a non-entity, shows a basic incoherence at the heart of our notion of time.

We can only retain, as we must, the notion that once I have existed it is eternally true that I have existed, if we think of the past as a realm of events which are present from their own point of view, and only past from ours. Pastness must be conceived somewhat like distance in space (though too space-like a conception of space must be avoided). Events at a distance are not distant in themselves. Spatial distance is a relative conception reporting the relation of a thing to some particular person. Pastness must also be a relative conception reporting the relation of something to a particular thought. The past is simply a time which though perfectly living and present in itself is at a distance from some particular piece of thinking.

Once you think in that way about the past, you are bound to think in the same way about the future. If the last century is present from its own point of view, then we are its future. You cannot think like that without assuming that events later than our own time are related to our time as we are to the nineteenth century. In short, our feature is a reality which is present in itself and simply at a temporal distance from us.

We must conclude that in the universe as it really is nothing passes away. Every experience which did occur, is occurring, or will occur (expressing the matter from *this* so-called present point of view) is part of the eternal filling of the universe. The experience I am having now seems to be in the process of ceasing just as it comes into being. But in truth it is just eternally there, and the feeling of ceasing to be is simply an erroneous sence of its own nature which ordinary finite experience has.

Since all experiences belong to the Absolute, and only in virtue of doing so can relate to each other in the ways we describe

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in terms of space and time and so forth, the Absolute must experience every finite experience as an eternal element of its own unchanging being. It has, or is, one eternal unchanging experience which includes the experiences of all times. The experiences feel themselves to be momentary transition points between one another But this is an illusion. No experience really takes over from another or gives way to another. They are all just eternally there. The feeling of their transitoriness is of course included in the Absolute, for the Absolute includes those very experiences, not merely some static simulacra of them. But though it feels their own feeling of transitoriness it feels even that as an eternal element of the eternal.

Since the Absolute is an eternal unchanging experience, a Nunc Stans, it cannot be struggling to be on to anything else. It must be in a state of contentment with itself, for discontent can only occur in time where it makes sense to struggle to throw off this present state and reach to another. Although the Absolute includes discontent it cannot be discontented in its total over all quality.

I suggest that this account both shows how time as we ordinarily conceive it does not pertain to Reality as it really is, and explains (within such limits on total understanding as we must expect) how there still in some sense is an experience of temporal succession. The experience of temporal succession is the eternal content of certain eternal elements in the unchanging Absolute. But these elements cannot grasp their own eternal character. This seems to me a clearer account of the relation between time and eternity than is given by one which puts eternity on one side, and time on the other. For it avoids simply rejecting the reality of what is fleeting by a verbal stipulation that only the unchanging may be called real.

These conclusions leave it open whether finite beings can ever get a grasp of their own eternity or whether we must leave that to the Absolute without hoping to participate in it personally ourselves. But mystics do claim to experience the world and themselves as eternal. Although this view of time and eternity does not show that there are bound to be such mystical experiences, it enables us to make rational sense of their deliverances granted they do occur. For although the ordinary finite experiences of day to day have an eternity which they cannot grasp, there is no reason why they should not lead into experiences

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which do register their own eternal character. Looked at from a temporal point of view these experiences will have a position in time, for other experiences will be related to them in ways which make them seem to be in the future or in the past of the individual's personal life. But in their own being they may feel to themselves what they really are, eternal elements in the eternal state of an eternal being.

Perhaps this casts some light on such puzzling Advaita Vedānta notions as that all creation stories are myths, and that we are already liberated if we only knew it, so that what is called liberation is really only liberation from the illusion that we are unliberated. For the distinction between higher spiritual states and the states of mind of ordinary life may be simply a difference in the extent to which an experience presents itself to itself as what all experiences truly are, elements in the eternal self illumination of an eternal being.

II

I believe that the view of the world I have been presenting has a great deal in commmon with the Vedāntin view, and more specifically with Śaṅkara's. Both views hold that the universe is fundamentally one, and that the separation of things from one another is only a relative truth. In particular, both hold that our separateness from one another as finite conscious beings is an illusion, and that really we are all aspects of the one universal consciousness. It is not that the One has become the many but that the many simply are the One appearing to itself in a certain way.

Moreover, each view holds that the world of temporal flux is an illusion and that true reality is unchanging.

But there may be some important differences between the views.

The most important difference, if it really holds, is an aspect of a general contrast often said to hold between Western and Eastern culture and religion, about the worth-whileness of human life. One can certainly gain the impression that for Advaita Vedānta there is little positive to be said for the many-ness in which the One has apparently dressed itself while Western spiritual monism has usually seen this as something of essentially positive value.

Speaking in crude temporal terms of how the One became the many (rather than more truly as an eternal One eternally

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holding the many within itself) I understand that for Advaita Vedānta this was a falling off from its own purity, whereas for Western monism it was a vital step to its own adequate self-fulfilment. Thus for the Vedāntin it seems that our only salvation lies in sensing our identity with Brahman and eventually thereby losing our illusory sense of separateness. As we all become merged with the One, the sufferings of plurality will disappear and there will be a return of all conscious life to a state of unitary bliss. For Western monism, in contrast, as I conceive it, there is positive good in the variety. The Absolute would be the poorer for not having all its diverse aspects. Although our togetherness in the Absolute is the final truth, many of the secular values of this world are genuine; mystical oneness with the Absolute is not the only worth while goal of a human life.

Where the Western monist will agree with the Vedāntin, however, is that an adequate ethics must rest implicitly if not explicitly, upon the recognition that it is the one Absolute which lives in all of us.

Moreover, Western monism, although insisting on the oneness of reality, thinks of the one reality as having a more definite articulation into a plurality than Advaita Vedānta seems to. It does not see the plurality of the world as altogether illusory. Illusion lies only in failure to realize that the same essence is pervasive throughout the many and that the many are united in an intensive One.

At a more abstract metaphysical level I suspect that the two philosophies have a somewhat different conception of the relation between time and eternity. My impression is that for Vedānta there is on the one hand the eternal unchanging Absolute or Brahman and on the other there is the changing world of daily life which is somehow there although unreal. Brahman as thus conceived is eternal because apart from the flux while for the absolute idealism which I advocate the apparent flux exists as a component of the One. Times I here and now call past, present and future are all eternal elements of its eternal being. Each moment of finite experience seems to itself to be in passage to the next, but the truth is that it and all the experiences which from its point of view are past, present or future are all, unchanging elements within the Absolute. Although each seems to itself to be ceasing to be in the very process of being at all, they are all just eternally there as its constituents.

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The question whether the One stands apart from the flux or eternally contains the experiences which seem to themselves to be its transitory phases is simply one form of the question how the many experiences of finite beings relate to the one absolute consciousness. Śaṅkara says: 'Hence one should realize that only the one sole Absolute exists, a perfectly homogeneous mass of Consciousness.' But if the reality is quite homogeneous how is it that in some sense your experiences exist, and mine exist, and are different one from another? One cannot conjure them away by calling them unreal. If they are part of the one massed Consciousness of the universe, then their existence is allowed for, and it is only denied that they are separate as they seem to be. But that is to give up something of the homogeneity of the Reality. But perhaps I am misunderstanding what is meant by homogeneity here. If the point is that all finite things lie within the Absolute, and never exist anywhere else, then that is precisely the doctrine I support.

There may also be some contrast between Śaṅkara's view of physical reality and the one I take. For me the physical world of common sense only exists as an appearance occurring in finite centres such as ours, but that appearance is the result of the influence on these centres of other centres of experience, not only those of humans and animals, but ones of lower grade which constitute the noumenon behind the inanimate world (and the animate world in its more purely physical aspects). The general explanation of the orderliness of the physical world lies in its being the appearance of a system of centres which all pertain to the unitary experience of the Absolute. However, the more specific explanation of the fact that we all see a particular physical object lies in our being similarly influenced by the low grade centres of experience whose relations to each other constitute the thing in itself of which it is the appearance. This panpsychic view of the noumenal essence of the physical world does not quite coincide with Śaṅkara's views, for he seems to have thought of the physical as deeply unconscious and as only existing as a phenomenon, whereas I hold that the phenomenal physical world is articulated into units behind each of which is a centre of experience which can be called its consciousness. (That does not mean that every conventionally recognized physical unit, such as a stone, has its individual sentience.)

Still, in spite of these important differences the form of abso-

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lute idealism to which I think the best, if not the most pervasive, insights of Western philosophy point, has much in common with the monism of Śaṅkara and of Advaita Vedānta. That this vision of things was arrived at on the basis of quite different cultural traditions reinforces its claims to truth.

NOTES

My knowledge of Śaṅkara comes mainly from *A Śaṁkara Source Book*, Volumes 1-3, edited and translated by A. J. Alston, Shanti Sadan, 29 Chepstow Villas, London. Other works I have found helpful include:

(i) S. N. L. Shrivasta: *Śaṁkara and Bradley*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1968.

(ii) M. Hiriyanna: *Essentials of Indian Philosophy*, Unwin Paperbacks, London, 1978.

(iii) Radhakrishnan: *Indian Philosophy*, Macmillan, London, 1923.

(iv) J. L, Brockington: *The Sacred Thread*, Edinburgh University Press, 1981.

I have also learnt much from Dr Arindam Chakrabarti.

My own version of absolute idealism has been arrived at under the influence of Schopenhauer, F. H. Bradley, Josiah Royce and others. I have developed my views most fully in *The Vindication of Absolute Idealism*, Edinburgh University Press, 1983.

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PART III

ETHICO-RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES OF ŚAṄKARA

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22

ŚAṄKARA'S HYMNS — THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE

G. PARTHASARATHY RAO

In the galaxy of writers on Indian philosophy, Śaṅkara, the exponent of Advaita, composed several works like *Śivānanda-laharī*, *Saundarya-laharī*, *Dakṣināmūrti-stotra*, etc. in praise of several deities of his choice. While expressing his full-fledged devotion in his mellifluous verses, Śaṅkara throws much light on the canons of Advaita philosophy too. Most of the objections raised by the opponents of Advaita against that school stand refuted or answered in his stray verses and devotional literature. Perhaps he is the only writer in the world of philosophy who harmoniously blended the dry philosophical ideas with the tender poetic imaginations, thus amply fulfilling one of the benefits of poetry, *i.e. śivetarakṣati* or destruction of what is bad in man. No other writer chose this method of inculcating philosophic ideas through the medium of poetry. His poetic compositions amply reveal the poet in him, and he effortlessly brings in the figures of speech like *upamā*, *rūpaka*, *yathāsaṅkhya*, *utprekṣā* and *kāvya-liṅga* to give a clear and picturesque description of the subject in hand. His command of figures of speech based on sound like *anuprāsa* and *yamaka* also is really commendable. Thus, this poet-philosopher or philosopher-poet makes the best use of his poetic talents to propagate his lofty philosophical truths. To give a simple example as to how Śaṅkara drives home the truth that, when the Self is realised, there can be no worldliness in man and he remains a pure spirit, the following verse can be quoted:

vayasi gate kaḥ kāma-vikāraḥ
śuṣke nīre kaḥ kāsāraḥ
kṣīṇe vitte kaḥ parivāro
jñāte tattve kaḥ saṁsāraḥ.

Again, in one of the simple verses of his *Mohamudgara* or *Bhajagovindam*, he shows the path to the state of *nirvāṇa* or *jīvan-*

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mukti. While Rāmānuja advocates liberation only after leaving the body, Śaṅkara convincingly proves that it is possible even while one is alive, *i.e.* even before the physical death.

satsaṅgatve nissaṅgatvaṁ, nissaṅgatve nirmohatvam
nirmohatve niścalatattvam, niścala-tattve jīvanmuktiḥ.

What is required is the steadfast and unflinching self-awareness with or without the outer, *i.e.* the body. In the recent past, we have seen that Ramana Maharshi was such a pure soul that enjoyed blissful state of *nirvāṇa* even before the fall of the body. He used to put his signature as "AUM" indicating that the individual soul has merged in the universal Self. One more instance from the same text, *Mohamudgara*:

kurute gaṅgā - sāgara - gamanaṁ, vrataparipālanam-
athavā dānam
jñāna-vihīnaḥ sarva-matena, muktiṁ na bhajati janma-
śatena.

The well-known difference between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja is that, while Śaṅkara advocates *jñāna* as the exclusive means of liberation, Rāmānuja believes in the twin factors, *jñāna* and *karma*, combined as the means. Śaṅkara in his *bhagavatgītā-bhāṣya* makes his view emphatically clear. After a long convincing argument' he concludes:

tasmāt gītāśāstre īṣan-mātreṇāpi śrautena smārtena vā
karmaṇā ātmajñānasya samuccayo na kenacid-darśayituṁ
śakyaḥ

Here, in the present verse, the same idea has been given in simpler terms. One may dive deep in rivers and seas, or observe austerities and penances, or give away one's wealth as alms to the poor; still he fails to get liberation if he does not possess *jñāna*, the indispensable means of liberation. There is no hope for such a person even after hundreds of births in the absence of *jñāna*.

Śaṅkara is never against logic. Though he lays great stress on the scriptural evidence, he recognises its importance in the *manana* state where the student tries to have an intellectual appreciation of what he has heard in the *śravaṇa* stage. He encourages the logic that goes to strengthen *śruti*, and all other argumentation according to him is unhealthy and unproductive. In his *Upadeśapañcaka* he warns:

vākyārthaśca vicāryatāṁ śrutiśiraḥ pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām
dustarkāt suviramyatāṁ, śrutimatastarko'nusandhīyatām.

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Futile argument, useless wrangling, is a great sin. Therefore, Śaṅkara cautions against dry logic where no sincerity of purpose is found. Such talk especially with realised souls has to be completely avoided (*budhajanair vādaḥ parityajyatām*).

As observed above, Śaṅkara unequivocally advocates *jñāna* as the only means of liberation. This *jñāna* again can be got through unflinching devotion, "*mokṣasādhana-sāmagryām-bhaktireva garīyasī*"— this statement from *Vivekacūḍamāṇi* supports this view. Summing up all these ideas, Śaṅkara has composed a beautiful verse in his *Śivānandalahārī* where devotion to Lord Śiva is the main theme. He adds an element of fun also keeping in view the foolishness of the logicians who try to establish God through syllogism like," *kṣityaṅkurādikaṁ sakartṛkaṁ, kāryatvāt, ghaṭavat.*"

Even Kālidāsa, the prince among poets, wonders how simple logic or *anumāna* can give us an idea of God, when we are not able to apprehend the nature of the external world itself, though it is very much present before our eyes.

pratyakṣo'pyaparicchedyaḥ mahyādirmahimā tava
āptavāg-anumānābhyāṁ sādhyaṁ tvām-pratikā kathā.

Here is Śaṅkara's verse:

ghaṭo vā mṛtpiṇḍo'pyaṇurapi ca dhūmo'gnir-acalaḥ
paṭovā tanturvā pariharati kiṁ ghoraśamanam
vṛthā kaṇṭhakṣobhaṁ vahasi tarasā tarkavacasā
padāmbhojaṁ śambhorbhaja paramasaukhyaṁ vraja sudhīḥ

Generally, logicians take the instances of pot and mud, or smoke, fire and hill to explain the subtleties in the relationship of cause and effect. They speak of different kinds of causes like *sādhāraṇa, asādhāraṇa, samavāya, asamavāya, nimitta* and *karaṇa.* Śaṅkara makes fun of logicians saying how these insentient objects like pot, etc. can help one to drive away the agonies of human life. Therefore, he advises people to be wise enough to surrender themselves to the feet of the Lord who alone can deliver the goods destroying worries and anxieties.

According to *āgama-śāstra* or *yoga-śāstra*, the divinity in man lies coiled up in *mūlādhāra*, the first of the seven stages — *mūlādhāra, svādhiṣṭhāna, maṇipūra, anāhata, viśuddha, ājñā* and *sahasrāra.* This is what they call 'Kuṇḍalinīśakti' or 'Coiled power.' By spiritual practices, this power is roused in a *sādhaka* and it travels upward through the Yogic nerve called *suṣumnā.* According to the intensity of practice, this power reaches higher and higher stages,

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till it reaches *sahasrāra*, the final stage or the highest rung in the ladder. Meanwhile, as it ascends, this power assumes greater dimensions, conquering all mundane or material obstructions that hinder its full development or limit its scope. When it reaches *sahasrāra*, it is united with the very source of divinity as a river is united with the sea. This wonderful secret of human evolution is well brought out by Śaṅkara in one of the verses in the *Saundarya-laharī*.

mahīṁ mūladhāre kamapi maṅipūre hutavāhaṁ
sthitaṁ svādhiṣṭhāne hṛdimarutam ākāśamupari
mano'pi bhrūmadhye sakalamapi bhittvā kulapathaṁ
sahasrāre padme saha rahasi patyā viharasi.

According to the *yoga-śāstra*, the first stage *mūlādhāra* is of *pṛthv-tattva*. The second stage, *svādhiṣṭhāna* is of *vahnitattva*. The third, *maṇipūra* has *jala-tattva*. The fourth, *anāhata* has *vāyu-tattva*. The next one, *viśuddha* possesses *ākāśa-tattva*. The penultimate stage, *i.e.*, *ājñā*, represents *manas-tattva* — the subtlest of all the previous ones. Having traversed this course of material equipment, the pure individual spirit enjoys unity with the universal Spirit in the seventh stage, *sahasrāra*, which is likened to a thousand-petalled lotus, just as a bride is united with her husband. This is the ultimate stage of human development where the individual soul is united with the universal Self from where it emerged.

It is a well-established fact that in Advaita the concept of *māyā* or *avidyā* plays a key role. Rāmānuja in his *Śrī-bhāṣya*, a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*, levels seven charges or inconsistencies in the *māyā-avidyā* which are briefly presented here to show how Śaṅkara has already provided answers for them in his illustrious verses in different contexts. (1) *Āśrayānupapatti*: Here Rāmājuja asks: what is the support *māyā-avidyā*? Evidently, it cannot rest in Brahman, for Brahman, by its very nature, is pure, self-luminous consciousness. Nor can it have individual soul as its support, for, the individual soul is the creation of *māyā*. How can the effect, *i.e.*, the individual soul be the locus of *māyā*? (2) *Tirodhānānupapatti*: How can *avidyā* which is likened to darkness conceal Brahman which is both self-conscious and self-luminous? It is something like darkness covering the sun. Moreover, what is meant by concealment of light by darkness? Is it that darkness obstructs the very production of light or does it mean that darkness destroys the light already produced? In both cases, it results that darkness can eliminate light. (3) *Svarūpānupapatti*: Here, Rāmā-

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nuja questions the nature of *avidyā*. According to the Advaitin, it is *anirvacanīya* or indefinable as it is *sadasadvilakṣaṇa*. Rāmānuja asks: how can a thing be different from being positive or negative? If a thing is positive, it cannot be destroyed. If it is negative, how can it create the world-illusion on Brahman? To be both negative and positive is self-contradictory. To be neither of them is logically absurd. (4) *Anirvacanīyatānupapatti*: Here Rāmānuja questions the *anirvacanīyatā* of *avidyā*. 5. *Pramāṇānupapatti*: What is the *pramāṇa* by which *avidyā* is known? It cannot be perception, for *avidyā* is neither positive nor negative. Inference cannot help us for there is no middle term or *hetu*. Moreover, when *avidyā* conceals Brahman, does it conceal fully or partly? If fully, then Brahman is something that is not worth realising. If partly, how can the partless (*niṣkala*) Brahman have such a predicament? (6) *Nivartakānupapatti*: Further, Rāmānuja argues that there can be no remover of *avidyā*. According to the Advaitin, the knowledge of attributeless Brahman removes or destroys *avidyā*. Such knowledge is impossible for every type of knowledge deals with object with attributes. (7) *Nivṛttyanupapatti*: Here it is argued that there can be no removal of *avidyā*. If it is positive, it cannot be removed. If negative, no removal is necessary. Truly speaking, bondage which is real cannot be removed by knowledge.

Śaṅkara in his illustrative verses amply provides answers for these doubts and objections. Rāmānuja demands a seat or locus for *avidyā* taking it as something real, which is not the case. Citsukha in his *Tattvapradīpikā* presents in clearer terms the nature of *avidyā*: "*bhāvābhāva-vilakṣaṇasya ajñānasya abhāva vilakṣaṇamātreṇa bhāvatvopacārāt.*" If the Advaitin speaks of the reality of *avidyā*, it is just due to the fact that it is different from what is not real. Though we accept that Brahman is the locus of *avidyā*, the non-duality of Brahman is not affected, since *avidyā* is not real. The nature of Brahman does not undergo any change, for in the *vivartavāda* of the Advaitin change is only apparent and not real. The apparent water in the mirage cannot make even a particle of sandy desert wet. This idea has been clearly presented by Śaṅkara in one of the verses in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*:

bhānuprabhāsañjanitābhrapaṅktiḥ
bhānuṁ tiro-dhāya vijṛmbhate yathā
ātmoditāhaṅkṛtir-ātmatattvaṁ
tathā tirodhāya vijṛmbhate svayam.

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Here an illustration is given as to how *avidyā* can cover or conceal Brahman. The cloud born on account of the sun appears to conceal the disc of the sun, but really is incapable of doing it. Similarly, *avidyā* which is dependent on Brahman appears to conceal it, but in reality it is not so. Sadānanda in his *Vedāntasāra* asks how a small patch of cloud can cover the disc of the sun which is 1 lakh 30 thousand times bigger than the earth and is crores of miles away from it. Still, out of ignorance we stick to the idea that cloud covers the sun. Next, about the nature of *avidyā* this is the view of Śaṅkara. Truly speaking, *avidyā* is neither positive nor negative, and this nature of it is realised only when one goes beyond it. Sureśvara in his *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* observes:

seyam-bhrāntiḥ nirālambā sarvajñāna-virodhinī
sahate na vicāraṁ sā tamo yadvad divākaram.

So, *avidyā* is spoken of as positive, since it is the cause for the misapprehension of Brahman as the universe. It is also negative because it is sublated by knowledge. Since it is essentially "unreal", Brahman is in no way affected by its presence. Śaṅkara indicates this truth in one of his verses in the *Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotra*:

bījasyāntar-ivāṅkuro jagad-idam-prāṅ-nirvikalpam-punaḥ
māyākalpitadeśakālakalanā-vaicitryacitrīkṛtam
māyāvīva vijṛmbhayatyapi mahāyogīva yas-svccchayā
tasmai śrīgurumūrtaye nama idaṁ śrīdakṣiṇāmūrtaye.

In this hymn, Śaṅkara has two ideas to refute the *pariṇāmavāda* accepted by Sāṅkhyas and Viśiṣṭādvaitins. It should be borne in mind that *pariṇāma* is real change, while *vivarta* is an apparent one.

atattvato'nyathā prathā vivarta ityudīritaḥ.
sa tattvato'nyathā prathā pariṇāma ityudāhṛtaḥ

By the expression *māyākalpita*, etc. Śaṅkara accepts *vivartavāda* as against *pariṇāmavāda*. Again, to show that Brahman has no direct involvement in creation, he says that it is completely free from this magic of creation as a magician, who is not influenced by the scenes of enchantment he presents on the stage: *māyāvīva vijṛmbhayatyapi mahā-yogīva yassvecchayā*."

Two objections remain unanswered out of the sevcn mentioned above, *viz.*, (i) *nivartakānupapatti* and (ii) *nivṛttyanupapatti*. According to Rāmānuja, there is no remover of *avidyā*. Śaṅkara says that a right type of understanding of Brahman is the remover. After getting out of the delusion of the rope-snake, one is

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free from fear. Similar is the case here too. He observes in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*:

samyag-vicārataḥ siddhā rajjutattvāvadhāraṇā
bhrāntyodita-mahāsarpa-bhayaduḥkhavināśinī.

Coming to the second point, the *nivṛtti* or removal of *avidyā* is possible when the right type of knowledge dawns on account of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. Basing on the *śruti* text, "*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ mantavyaḥ nididhyāsitavyaḥ*," Śaṅkara argues that when the light of identity of the individual soul with Brahman arises, there is no more bondage; and the *sādhaka* comes to enjoy supreme bliss. Again, from the same text, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* we have:

brahmābhinnatvavijñānam-bhavamokṣasya kāraṇam
yenādvitīyam-ānandam-brahma sampadyate budhaiḥ

Basing on these seven inconsistencies shown by Rāmānuja, Veṅkaṭanātha, a follower of Rāmānuja, composed a work called *Śatadūṣaṇī* wherein he has shown sixtysix defects in the concept of *avidyā*. They need not be separately dealt with because the refutation that holds good in the case of the seven inconsistencies is sufficient to meet them also. Thus, Śaṅkara in his poetic compositions and illustrative verses gives a clear picturesque exposition so that subtle truths of Advaita can be appreciated.

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23

ŚAṄKARA'S VIEWS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND SPIRITUALITY

SITANATH GOSWAMI

The word 'philosophy' is a derivative of the Greek words 'philos' and 'sophia'; 'philos' means love, and 'sophia' means wisdom. Thus the primary meaning of the word philosophy becomes 'love of wisdom'. Gradually the meaning is extended to 'the love, study or pursuit of wisdom, or of knowledge of things and their causes, whether theoretical or practical.' The word 'spirituality' means 'the nature or character of being related to the spirit or soul of a person.' Now let us switch over to our own language in which 'philosophy' is to be translated as '*darśana*'; 'spirituality' will mean '*ātmikatā*', '*ātmaviṣayitā*', '*ādhyātmikatā*', etc. The word '*darśana*' is derived from the root '*dṛś*' with the addition of the suffix *lyuṭ* in the instrumental voice (*karaṇavācya*). Hence *darśana* is a branch of learning by which something is visualized. Now the crux of the problem is: what is that 'something' which is visualized by a branch of learning called '*darśana*'? It cannot be anything most ordinary; on the other hand, persons with a bit of insight and a penetrating intelligence are in search of a principle that is permanent and imperishable. All the theistic (*āstika*) and the atheistic (*nāstika*) systems except Cārvāka accept such an entity, and call it Self or *Ātman*. Hence the study of *darśana* or philosophy in India is almost indispensably connected with Self or *Ātman*. Now we are to discuss the issue in respect of Vedānta, and especially regarding Śaṅkara's view on it.

In spite of the proverbial opposition of the Nyāya and the Vedānta systems it is interesting to note that under the *Nyāyasūtra*, "*tadatyanta-vimokṣo'pavargaḥ*" (1.1.22), the commentator Vātsyāyana describes salvation or *mokṣa* as the absence of fear, metamorphosis or death, as Brahman and as the attainment of well being "*tadabhayam ajaram amṛtyupadam brahma kṣemaprāptir iti*" (*Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.22, *bhāṣya*). This line of commentary is closely

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similar to a line of the *Upaniṣad*: "*sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā'jaro 'maro 'mṛto 'bhayo brahmābayaṁ hi vai brahma bhavati ya evaṁ veda*" (*Bṛ Up.*, 4.4.25). This very line of the *Upaniṣad* is accepted by Śaṅkara as the quintessence of the entire *Āraṇyaka* and the entire *Upaniṣad*. This point is repeatedly stressed upon by Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* of the said *kaṇḍikā*.[1] The philosophical pursuits of these two systems culminate in this way in the ascertainment of Self or Brahman.

So many things appear before our senses. A philosopher analyses them critically, judges them dispassionately, finds out the real status of their existence, determines whether they are mere seeming or having practical existence or permanent. A question is often asked — what is permanent? The reply is that something which is ever-existent is to be called permanent. The question is further shifted as: How is existence proved? Here the Advaita standpoint is that existence is proved by knowledge, and that existence without knowledge is meaningless. Knowledge (*cit*) and existence (*sat*) are intrinsically the same; one cannot be divested of the other. Knowledge is happiness since wherever there is knowledge, there is invariably happiness. If I know something, I am happy. It may sometimes be argued that there are some occasions of knowledge being the source of unhappiness. Here the Advaitins hold that there is nothing in this world which is unpleasant for everybody at all times. Even the dirtiest things are pleasing to the worms. The poison to be avoided is swallowed as medicine. Further, no knowledge is by itself unpleasant, although sometimes the result of the knowledge may be unpleasant. The absense of a news of a relative or friend pains us, and we feel restless and unhappy for not having a news. Then the news itself pleases us, removes the restlessness, although the news may be of a serious accident or death. Here we should note carefully that the news itself makes us happy, but the consequence makes us unhappy. However, wherever there is existence, there is knowledge and bliss (*ānanda*). Thus, existence (*sat*), knowledge (*cit*) and bliss (*ānanda*) are essentially the same, expressed in different languages.[2] Brahman is everywhere; it is of this nature (*svarūpa*). So in every object these three, *viz.* existence, knowledge and bliss, are to be easily traced. This nature of the Self has been unfolded in *śruti*, especialy in the *Gopālatāpinyupaniṣad* which begins with —

saccidānandarūpāya kṛṣṇāyākliṣṭakāriṇe

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namo vedāntavedyāya gurave buddhisākṣiṇe. (1.2)

We can easily realise this nature of the Self. Let everything be non-existent, but I am existent, and there is no doubt about it. I may know nothing, but I am aware of myself.[3] Let there be no happiness elsewhere, but there is no doubt about happiness in my own Self. Not only that, it is this happiness which is to be found extended everywhere.

In order to prove that *Ātman* is of the nature of bliss and that all bliss is derived from *Ātman*, the teachers of Vedānta often refer to the *Maitreyī-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* where Yājñavalkya says in reply to Maitreyī's question that none can have immortality (*amṛtatva*) by having riches. The pleased husband advises that only the knowledge of the Self can bring in immortality and that all sentiments of love, affection, etc. emerge from the Self. The wife's feeling of love for the husband is in fact her love for her own Self. Similarly the husband's love for the wife is in essence the love for his own Self. The father's love for the child is really the love for himself, otherwise why does he continue to kiss the child with his unshaven face even when the child cries for the painful pricks.[4] So the only thing in this world worth knowing is *Ātman*, and that knowledge is to be attained through learning (*śravaṇa*), argumentation (*manana*), and meditation (*nididhyāsana*) — *cf.* "*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyi*" (*Bṛ Up.*, 2.4.5 and 4 5.6). In view of the special importance of this discussion *śruti* incorporates this doctrine in the same *Upaniṣad* twice in the same language even without dropping the conversation between the same couple, *viz.* Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī. Śaṅkara justifies this repetition by holding that the one in second chapter is to be taken as a statement, and that in the fourth chapter is the conclusion arrived at by the arguments resorted to. In all syllogisms, this procedure is adopted since the first proposition therein is a statement (*pratijñā*) and the fifth one is the conclsion (*nigamana*) reached by reason (*hetu*).[5] If we read between the lines, this solution becomes evident from the language of the *śruti*. In *Bṛ. Up.* 2.4.5, Yājñavalkya says that everything is to be known by the knowledge, learning, argumentation, and meditation of *Ātman*. We may notice here the words *darśanena*, *śravaṇena*, *matyā* and *vijñānena*, as oppossed to *dṛṣṭe*, *śrute*, *mate*, and *vijñāte* in *Br. Up.*, 4.5.6. Here the former group convey some facts, but the latter states that these facts have been established.

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The *Upaṇiṣad* propounds that the Self or Brahman is omnipresent, and everything in this world is to be known as *Brahman*.[6] The Self is far and near, within all and without all.[7] Eeverything is Brahman.[8] If it be so, everything should be as real as Brahman and nothing should be branded as false. But this militates against the Advaita doctrine of the falsity of the world. In reply to the above Śaṅkara maintains in his work, *Vākyasudhā* that in all worldly objects we find five elements as existence, revelation, happiness, name and form. Of these five the first three constitute the nature of Brahman and the next two, that of the world alone.

asti bhāti priyaṃ rūpaṃ nāma cetyaṃśapañcakam
ādyaṃ trayaṃ brahmarūpaṁ jagadrūpaṃ tato dvayam
(*Vākyasudhā*, 20)

The table before us possesses existence, revelation and happiness; so this is *Brahman*; but it has a name and a form too for which the table must be false. Intrinsically, the table is true. We call it false because the name and form disappear after some time. The intrinsic nature of Brahman *i.e.* existence, revelation and happiness are inseparable. We dissociate the parts and get the four legs and the top. All these are equally true for existence, revelation and happiness are traced in them also. The legs and top are existent, revealing and sources of happiness. The legs, etc. may be broken into pieces, but they are also existent, revealing and blissful; for this reason these parts are non-different from Brahman and also true. But at the same time they have names and forms which are false. We may now go to any length and see that even the smallest parts are existent, revealing and blissful. The very fact of existence, revelation and bliss being present everywhere, the omnipresence of Brahman is established. The nature of Brahman can be traced in illusory objects too. The piece of silver cognized on a piece of shell is also existent, revealing and blissful. Thus intrinsically the shell-silver also is true, but we call it false for the disappearance of the name and form. Similarly the table before us is intrinsically true, but we, the Advaitins, call it false because of the changing name and form.

It is an irony of fate that instead of concentrating on the unchanging existence, revelation and bliss, we are attracted and enchanted by the changing and unreal names and forms of the objects. This is due to our ignorance which overwhelms us by its nature of veiling the reality and projecting unreal things on the original ones. Ignorance or nescience (*avidyā*) is the root of all

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evils. We cannot understand our real nature because of this ignorance that shrouds the lustre of my existence till it is removed by the instruction of an enlightened person. Without knowing the piece of rope we perceive it as a snake and are afraid of it. Similarly without knowing the Self we consider ourselves as men full of miseries, *viz.* birth, death, decay and disease. A careful grasp of the instruction of a revealed soul will make us comprehend the eternal nature of Śiva.

rajjvajñānād bhāti rajjau yathāhiḥ svātmājñānād ātmano jīvabhāvaḥ
āptoktyāhibhrāntināśe sa rajjur-jīvo nāhaṃ deśikoktyā śivo'ham.
Ātmapañcaka, 2)

When the creator or *Aparabrahman* knew Himself, He became all. Whoever knows — 'I am Brahman' becomes all as Vāmadeva knew and became Manu, Sūrya, etc.[9] By referring to this *śruti*, Śaṅkara concludes that the only thing on which we may depend is the Self, and that is worth knowing — "*ātmetyevopāsīta. tadevaitasmin sarvasmin padaniyamātmatattvam*" (Śaṅkara on Introductory *bhāṣya* of *Bṛ. Up.* 2.4.)

In order to get rid of all troubles we should look inside. But the fact is that we are continuously looking outside and are being subjected to sufferings. The irresistible attraction of colour, taste, odour, touch and sound makes the senses disbalanced, and these senses being themselves enamoured of these enjoyments draw in the mind in such an enticing manner that the mind nurtures the ideas when the crude objects are absent.[10] This is a serious development which a conscientious man must be afraid of. The sense-organs are so designed by the creator that they must be dissociated from the objects, howsoever pleasing and attractive they may be, but the mind is such an organ which has no rest and goes on thinking of the beloved objects even in dreams. Then the man loses balance and is swayed away towards destruction. Without letting loose the sense-organs and the mind, a discerning person should veer away the senses towards the resplendent Self and employ the mind accordingly in the ascertainment of the nature of the Self. To fail to turn back and to look inside means destruction. In animal life, it is found that owing to the folly of one single sense that particular animal of insect is ruined. For example, a deer can easily run beyond the range of the arrow of the hunter, but it is enticed by the sweet notes of

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the flute, and slows down its movement for listening to the sound. Now it is easily pierced by the hunter with his arrow. The virile male elephant can hardly be overpowered and caught by men; but owing to the attraction of tactual organ he is entrapped at a moment of his tactual enjoyment with the female counterpart. Bright light of fire draws the insects into it only to burn them to death. The nasal organ of the fish is so blindingly acute that they are charmed by the smell of the food spread over as a bait. Now they are easily caught by the angler. Greed for the taste of honey makes a bee tucked up inside the petals of a lotus in the evening. In all these five instances we have noticed the sad plight of one type of creature for its fault concerning only one sense-organ. It is a pity that the most advanced creature like the human being is going on indulging in unrestrained extravagance of all the five sense-organs. Such a man cannot reach the supreme goal of emancipation; on the contrary, endless miseries await him. A nice *śloka* of Śaṅkara may be cited —

śabdādibhiḥ pañcabhir — eva pañca pañcatvamāpuḥ
svaguṇena baddhāḥ
kuraṅga-mātaṅga-pataṅga-mīna-bhṛṅgā naraḥ pañca-
bhir-añcitaḥ kim.
(*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 76)

It is the Self and the Self alone which has resplendence. Here is self-luminosity and everything else is luminous by its effulgence. A teacher asks the student to mention the substance that is most effulgent. The reply came — during the daytime the sun is that substance, and in the night there is the candle, etc. The teacher asks again through which light can we know the sun or the candle, etc.? The student answers: It is the eye that reveals this. The teacher further queries: How do you know when the eyes are shut? The student replies — it is intellect (*dhī*) that reveals. "How do we know this intellect?" — this was the last question of the teacher. The last answer of the student is — "It is myself, my one existence, my very nature that brightens the intellect even. That Self or *Ātman* is the best lustre; that is the *guru*, the preceptor. I am that lustre." *Ekaślokī* is a work which is complete in sense but only within the limit of one *śloka*. This conversation showing the nature of *Ātman* is set forth in the *Ekaślokī* by Śaṅkara:[11]

kiṁ jyotis-tava bhānumān ahani me rātrau pradī-
pādikaṁ

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syād-evaṁ ravidīpadarśanavidhau kiṁ jyotir ākhyāhi me
cakṣus-tasya nimīlanādisamaye kiṁ dhīr-dhiyo darśane
kiṁ tatrāham-ato bhavān paramakaṁ jyotis-tadasmi
prabho.

The Self is of the nature of consciousness, and everything else is illumined by the Self. We may often think that the eye or the ear or the other sense-organ illumines the form or the sound, etc. But this view cannot be accepted because those organs also are to be illumined by the mind. Without the help of the mind these sense-organs remain inactive. Now these mental faculties, rather the mind, also being dependent on something self-luminous require illumination for their own radiance. The illuminator of the mind is the Self which is self-revealing and requires nothing for its brilliance. Śaṅkara says (*Vākyasudhā*, 1):

rūpaṁ dṛśyaṁ locanaṁ dṛk tad drśyaṁ dṛk tu mānasam
dṛśyā dhīvṛttayaḥ sākṣī dṛgeva na tu dṛśyate.

As in the court of law the witness proves the incident because of his presence on the spot, so also the *sākṣin* in Vedānta proves and establishes the existence of everything else. As the witness requires no proof of his own existence, so in Vedānta the Self requires no other proof for the establishment of its own existence. The witness of a court must have a direct knowledge of the incident, and he must not gather the information through any other medium or agency. Similarly the *sākṣin* or witness-self in Vedānta requires no help of any *pramāṇa* or the instrument of cognition. It illumines the objects directly by its own lustre. In the case of the illumination of a jar, a man takes the help of his sense-organ, but as regards the mental modes no sense-organ, no agency of anything is necessary excepting the ever-present glow of the Self or *sākṣin*. In fact, neither the mind nor the sense-organs can illuminate anything because they have no capacity to do so for the absence of illumination in themselves. Thus only the *sākṣin* is the illuminator, and everything else is illumined. We may recall the *mantra* of the *Kenopaniṣad* where it is maintained that the Self is to be known as the ear. The Self is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of the speech, the breath of the breath and the eye of the eye. (*Kenopaniṣad*, 1.2)

All philosophical enquiries converge in the Self and culminate in the quest for that supreme Being. We should have the courage to leave aside everything and go straight towards the realisation of the Self. We feel ourselves as limited and bound;

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the result is endless pain and grief. The moment we can shun our bondages, and can think 'we are free', we are really freed for ever. Swami Vivekananda says: "If you dare declare that you are free, free you are this moment. If you say you are bound, bound you will remain. This is what Advaita boldly declares." (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. II, p. 350).

According to Śaṅkara and the Advaita Vedānta, *jīva* is non-different from Brahman, but the defect is that we do not feel it. Here feeling is achieving, knowledge is salvation. A person wearing a necklace sometimes becomes ignorant of it and frantically searches after it. But whenever he knows it he gets it too. After the attainment of knowledge the body becomes a temple, *jīva* becomes Śiva, nescience is offered, the feeling is 'I am that'.

deho devālayaḥ prokto jīvo devaḥ sadāśivaḥ
tyajed ajñāna-nirmālyaṁ so'ham-bhāvena pūjayet.
(*Atmapūja*[12], 10)

Śaṅkara says that a man with spiritual aspirations should act in a manner that all his actions relate to that supreme Self. His thought-process is explained as — "Oh Śiva, my self is Yourself, my intellect is Your wife, my life-breaths are Your companions, my body is Your abode, the items of my sense-enjoyment are collected for Your worship, my sleep is meditation on Yourself, my steps are for Your circumambulation, my words are Your prayers. Whatever I do is Your salutation and homage."

ātmā tvaṁ girijā matiḥ sahacarāḥ prāṇāḥ śarīraṁ gṛhaṁ
pujā te viṣayopabhogaracanā nidrā samādhisthitiḥ
sañcārastu padoḥ pradakṣiṇavidhiḥ stotrāṇi sarvā giro
yad-yat karma karomi tattad-akhilaṁ śambho tavārādhanam.
(*Ibid.*, 14)

NOTES

1. "Idāniṃ samastasyaivāraṇyakasya yo'rtha uktaḥ sa samuccityāsyāṃ kaṇḍikāyāṃ nirdiśyate, etāvān samastāraṇyakārtha iti" (Śaṅkara under 4.4.25). Again "eṣa sarvasyā upaniṣadaḥ saṃkṣipto'rtha" uktaḥ (*Ibid*).

2. "Yathā ca sadbheda aupādhikaḥ evaṁ sajjñānānandabhedo'pi, sattvarahitajñānānandayoḥ śūnyatvaprasaṅgāt, bodhāt matvarahitasataś ca bhānābhāvaprasaṅgāt, dṛśyatve kalpitatvena sattvāyogāt, sadbodhātmaka-sākṣiṇaś ca paramapremāspadatvenānandasvābhāvyāvagamāt iti ... satyajñānanandātmakaṃ brahma niścīyate" (*Vedāntakalpataru on Brahmasūtra*, 1.1.2, NSP ed., p.5).

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3. "na hi jātu kaścid atra sandigdhe'haṃ vā nāhaṃ veti na ca viparyasyati nāham eveti" (*Bhāmatī*, *Adhyāsabhāṣya*, N.S. Press ed., p. 5).

4. śmaśrukaṇṭakavedhena bāle rudati tatpitā
cumbatyeva na sā prītir bālārthe svārtha eva sā.
(*Pañcadaśī*, 12.10

5. "āgamapradhānena madhukāṇḍena (chapters I&II) brahmatattvaṃ nirdhāritam punastasyaiva upapattipradhānena yājñavalkyiyena kāṇḍena (chapters III & IV) pakṣa-pratipakṣa-parigrahaṃ kṛtvā vigṛhyavādena vicāritam athedāniṃ nigamanasthānīyaṃ maitreyī-brāhmaṇam ārabhyate" (Śaṅkara under Introductory *bhāṣya* of *Bṛ. Up.* 4.5).

6. *Īśopaniṣad*, 1.

7. *Ibid.*, 5.

8. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 3.14.1.

9. *Bṛ. Up.* 1.4.10.

10. *Gītā*, 2.59.

11. The same idea is found repeated in the work, *Vedāntakeśari*, in verse 95.

12. This work is also known as *Parā Pūjā*.

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24

THE ETHICAL INTERPRETATION OF TATTVAMASI

K. N. NEELAKANTAN ELAYATH

The great sentence '*tattvamasi*' occurring in the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* is generally considered as the most epoch-making statement ever made in the history of Indian philosophy. It proclaims, according to Śaṅkara, the great metaphysical truth of the identity of the Self with Brahman, the ultimate reality. In the tradition of Advaita Vedānta all later preceptors also have interpreted *tattvamasi* as implying the metaphysical identity of the Self with Brahman. But a question may be raised here: Can *tattvamasi* be interpreted also as an ethical concept? Can we deduce that by reason of this identity one should have love towards others? Or can we safely accept this as a moral maxim, as a guiding principle in all our activities?

Two diametrically opposed views have been expressed on the ethical interpretation of *tattvamasi*. One is to consider the doctrine as a *sine qua non* of ethics and the other is to regard it as cutting at the very root of religion and ethics. Paul Deussen, thus, has styled this doctrine as the supreme moral maxim.[1] "Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself is the requirement of the Bible," says Deussen, "but on what grounds does this demand to be based, since feeling is in myself alone and not in another? 'Because' the Veda here adds, in explanation 'thy neighbour is in truth thy very self and what separates you from him is mere illusion." Similiarly Schopenhauer, a great admirer of Vedānta, has based his own ethics on the theory of the identity of spirits. Quite contrary to this, there are also critics who considered *tattvamasi* as antagonistic to religion and ethics. "If everything is Brahman why should any effort be made for the advancement of Self or for the good of others?" asks M. M. Williams.[2] In a similar vein, a host of critics like A. C. Bouquet, Albert Schweitzer, are of the view that the effect of such a doctrine on conduct is a

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complete detachment from the affairs of this life and renders social service meaningless. According to these critics, if *tattvamasi* is interpreted merely as implying the metaphysical identity, there cannot be any place for active ethics; for ethics presupposes plurality or ultimate difference of one individual from the other. These two views on *tattvamasi* will be closely examined.

The idea of personality as the central concept in dualistic systems seems to lie at the root of the view that *tattvamasi* is against religion and ethics. The dualistic systems take the personality or ego of the individual and its difference as a basic requisite for ethics. Here the question may be asked: is it not the negation of individuality at the root of ethics rather than its affirmation? From experience it is found that the latter is the basis of active ethics. For example, when a man sacrifices himself for the sake of others, what is involved is the negation of individuality and not its affirmation. The dualist's concept of personality as real is in sharp contrast with that of Śaṅkara. For Śaṅkara as long as the illusion of the personality remains one cannot be truly ethical. Essential difference of individuals is incompatible with active ethics. For him oneness of the self is the root of ethics, *i.e.*, identifying oneself with others and thus negate one's own individuality. The significant question here seems to be whether this oneness is affirmed in action or in mere conceptual thought. The doctrine of *tattvamasi* is not something to be confined to the conceptual thought alone, it must manifest in corresponding actions as well. A clue to this idea can be seen in Śaṅkara's own statements scattered in his *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*. In the context of the question of performing altruistic deeds (*lokasaṁgrahārtham karma*) Śaṅkara says, "Everywhere in spiritual science the very characteristics of successful yogins are taught as the means to attain that state since they can be attained by effort."[3] The characteristics of a realized soul are given in the *Bhagavadgītā* in the description of *sthitaprajña* and *guṇātīta*. And here several qualities like compassion, non-violence, interest in the well being of all living beings, etc., are mentioned as characteristics of realised souls. The justification for cultivating these virtues is the doctrine of *tattvamasi* which is the alpha and omega of Śaṅkara's ethics.

The doctrine of the identity of spirit can thus legitimately be interpreted as an ethical concept. It is the affirmation of this principle in every activity of man that makes him really ethical.

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So long as one clings to one's individuality or private ego, one is unethical. When one slowly and steadily negates one's individuality by identifying oneself actively with others, only then can one be really ethical. We know in our day-to-day life that there is difference between one man and another. But this outward difference is not in any way an incentive for active love. Ethics of active love, in fact, develops when one slowly gives up the idea of ultimate difference and tries to establish a relationship with others — a relationship which, in the end, is one of identity. And true ethics is possible only at this stage of identification.

According to Śaṅkara, for any ethical activity one requires a sense of 'oneness' or of 'identity' with others. But though this identity in turn, presupposes 'some kind of difference', it need not be an absolute and ultimate one. For ethics, difference is only an occasion; if it were absolute, ethical activities would have become impossible. The only question here is: of these two, *i e.*, difference and identity, which is real in the deepest sense? The difference is not so essential as identity as far as the question of ethics is concerned. That is, whenever ethics is seriously taken, the difference slowly but surely disappears. Therefore, difference cannot be equally real as identity. That is why Śaṅkara accepts identity as ultimately real and difference as only empirically real.

The tendency of the Neo-Vedāntins also is towards interpreting *tattvāmasi* as an ethical concept. The two great Advaitins of modern India, Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji have based all their practical ethics on the non-duality of spirit preached by Śaṅkara. About the Golden rule, 'Love your neighbour as thyself,' Swami Vivekanada observes,[4] "Though all religions have taught ethical precepts such as 'do not kill', 'do not injure', 'love your neighbour as thyself,' etc., yet none of these have given the reason. Why should I not injure my neighbour? To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the Hindus, who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the Hindus say that this Ātman is absolute and all-pervading, therefore infinite... Therefore by injuring one neighbour the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical truth underlying all ethical codes." "And all that we call ethics and morality and doing good to others," he further declares, "is also but the manifestation of this oneness. This expression of oneness is what we call love and sympathy and it is the basis of all our

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ethics and morality."[5] Swami Vivekananda fully realised that, if the basic difference is ultimate, it is difficult to give a logical place for ethical actions involving self-sacrifice and self-negation.

Several ethical ideals of Mahatma Gandhi had its basis in Śaṅkara's theory of the identity of spirit. On the basis of the non-dualistic theory of the Self, Gandhiji gave a new definition and interpretation of ethics. Gandhiji frankly declares: "I am an Advaitist, yet I can support Dvaitism."[6] Again, "The soul is omnipresent; why should she care to be confined within the cage-like body and do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage. We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation." It is also from *tattvamasi* that he drew his arguments for the interpretation of *ahiṁsā* as a positive character. In one context Śaṅkara goes to the extent of saying that working for the welfare of others itself is *ahiṁsā*.[7] It was perhaps from this statement of Śaṅkara that even Gandhiji got the clue and built up his practical ethics. Once Gandhiji wrote in *Young India*: "I don't believe that an individual may gain spiritually when all that surrounds him suffer. I believe in Advaita. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives."[8] The moral and religious ideals of Gandhiji thus to a great extent are influenced by the doctrine of *tattvamasi*.

Thus, the ethical ideals preached by these two servants of humanity, Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji, are derived from the interpretation of *tattvamasi* in the ethical context. Though Śaṅkara has laid great emphasis on the metaphysical aspect of *tattvamasi*, it is also capable of being interpreted in an ethical sense and that makes the doctrine more relevant to the modern world.

NOTES

1. *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* (New Delhi, 1972), p. 49.
2. *Comparative Religion* (Penguin books, 1967), p. 127.
3. *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*, II. 55.
4. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Vol. I, 1962) p. 385.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 389.
6. *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad), Vol. VI, p. 107.
7. *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*, V. 25.
8. Quoted in *The Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi to the World of Thought* (University of Madras), 1962, p. 93.

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25

ŚAṄKARA ON JÑĀNA-YOGA

V. R. KALYANASUNDARA SASTRI

I

The *Bhagavad-gītā* which is included in the *prasthānatraya* is a *mokṣa-śāstra*. Its central teaching is in agreement with that of the *Upaniṣad*, and so though it is *smṛti*, it is as authoritative as the *Upaniṣad* which is *śruti*. Enjoying the status of scripture, the *Bhagavad-gītā* sets forth the nature of the highest end as well as the means thereto. It is necessary to make a few preliminary observations about the means taught in the *Bhagavad-gītā* before considering the nature of the highest end.

I invite your attention to the following verses in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, III, 1-3, which serve as the basis for the observations which I propose to make. Arjuna asks Lord Krishna: "If it be thought by Thee that knowledge is supreme to action, Oh Janārdana, why dost thou, Oh Keśava, direct me to this terrible action?" He then requests Lord Krishna as follows: "Tell me with certainty that *one way* by which I may attain the good." The following is Lord Krishna's reply to Arjuna's question: "In this world a two-fold path was taught by me at first, Oh sinless one — that of the Sāṅkhyas by devotion to knowledge, and that of the Yogins by devotion to action," III, 1-3.

If we pay attention to the verses quoted above in the context of the entire teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the following points which emerge deserve careful consideration. 1. There are two distinct paths, the path of action and the path of knowledge, for the attainment of the highest goal. 2. What is called *bhakti-yoga*, the path of devotion, is only a variation of *karma-yoga*, the path of action. 3. The path of knowledge is superior to the path of action. 4. The two paths of *karma* and *jñāna* cannot be combined at the same time by the same individual. 5. Nevertheless, the two paths are related, the path of action serving as a preliminary discipline to the path of knowledge.

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II

The five points mentioned above may be explained briefly for the purpose of bringing out the significance of *jñāna-yoga*, the path of knowledge.

1. In the introduction to his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* Śaṅkara speaks of the two-fold Vedic rellgion of works and renunciation as maintaining the order of the universe. In another context in the same introduction, Śaṅkara observes: "The *Gītā-śāstra* expounds the two-fold religion whose aim is the supreme good."

What is called *pravṛtti-mārga* is *karma-yoga*, and what is known as *nivṛtti-mārga* is *jñāna-yoga*. The former consists in the performance of one's duties as an offering to the Lord without any concern for the fruits thereof, while the latter consists in the renunciation of all action leading to the pursuit of knowledge after having attained the purification of the mind. It is these two paths that Lord Krishna refers to in his reply to Arjuna. Krishna says that the Sāṅkhyas pursue the path of knowledge and that the Yogins, the path of action. In his commentary on these verses, Śaṅkara points out that "*jñāna-yoga* is suited to the Sāṅkhyas, who possess a clear knowledge of the Self and the not-Self, who renounce the the world from *brahmacarya*, who determine the nature of things in the light of the Vedāntic wisdom, who belong to the highest class of *sannyāsins* known as the *paramahaṁsas*, and whose thoughts ever dwell on Brahman only." The Yogins, on the contrary, are those who are inclined to action.

2. Ordinarily we speak of three paths or disciplines, *viz. karma-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*. How is it, then, that Lord Krishna speaks of only two paths — *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*? Why is it that *bhakti-yoga* is not mentioned even though the twelfth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is about *bhakti-yoga*? The answer is that *bhakti-yoga* is only a variation of *karma-yoga* and so it is not mentioned as an independent path. Meditation on the universal form of the Lord as endowed with qualities is intelligible only in the case of one who pursues the path of action. Lord Krishna says at the end of Chapter XI: "He who does work for me, who looks on me as the Supreme, who is devoted to me, who is free from attachment, who is without hatred for any being, he comes to me, Oh Pāṇḍava." (XI, 55). This declaration of the Lord is certainly not applicable to one who, renouncing every action, seeks to realise the Supreme which is *nirguṇa*. One who is not

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devoted to the Lord will not do any action as an offering to the Lord. Again, one who pursues the path of knowledge after having attained the purification of the mind will not be engaged in action. It follows, therefore, that a devotee cannot be but a *karma-yogin*. So *bhakti-yoga* can be subsumed under *karma-yoga*. And it is for this reason that it is not mentioned as a separate path.

3. Arjuna understood that Lord Krishna has taught him that the path of knowledge is superior to the path of action.

4. He also understood that the two paths cannot be combined. If the two paths could be combined, he would not have requested Krishna to tell him with certainty that one path by which he may attain the supreme good. The path of knowledge is considered to be superior in so far as it is the direct means to the realisation of the highest good. *Karma-yoga* is a preparatory discipline. It is conducive to the attainment of the highest good, not directly, but only indirectly. And the two paths cannot be combined at the same time by the same individual because the conditions of the eligibility in the two cases are quite different. One has to practise *karma-yoga* for the purpose of attaining the purification of the mind. This is the preliminary discipline, the ground work for spiritual progress. After attaining the purification of the mind, and after renouncing all *karma*, one treads the path of knowledge.

5. It follows from what has been said that the two paths are related: *jñāna-yoga* presupposes *karma-yoga*, and *karma-yoga* must lead on to *jñāna-yoga*. There is a clear statement in the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself stressing the importance of the performance of *karma* for the purpose of the purification of the mind. "By the body alone, by the mind alone, by the intellect alone, by mere senses also, Yogins perform action without attachment, for the purification of the mind." (V, 2)

It may be noted here that an action which a person performs may be bodily action or mental action. If so, *bhakti* or devotion is undoubtedly *karma* which is mental, as distinguished from bodily action. And every *karma* — whether it is bodily or mental — when performed without attachment to the results is conducive to the attainment of the purification of the mind which is necessary for the pursuit of the path of knowledge, through the threefold discipline of guided study (*śravaṇa*), rational reflection (*manana*), and repeated contemplation (*nididhyāsana*).

The sequential relation between the two paths and the attain-

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ment of the highest good through knowledge may be stated as follows: From *karma-yoga* there arises the purification of the mind; and from that, mediate knowledge; and therefrom renunciation of all action; and after that, establishment in immediate knowledge which is known as *jīvan-mukti*; and finally release from the body known as *videha-mukti*.

III

The expression "*jñāna-yoga*" means, according to Śaṅkara, that knowledge itself is *yoga* (*jñānameva yogaḥ*). The word "yoga" means that which unites (*yujyata iti yogaḥ*). Or, the word *yoga* may be explained as that by which union is attained, (*yujyate anena iti yogaḥ*). The idea is that knowledge is the means through which Brahman, the supreme reality, the supreme good, is realised. If knowledge is the means to the realisation of the supreme reality, it is necessary to know: what is knowledge? And it is equally necessary to know: what is ignorance? To know the distinction between *kṣetrajña* and *kṣetra*, is knowledge; and to know anything else is ignorance. This is clearly stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (XIII, 2) by the Lord as follows: "Do thou also know me as *kṣetrajña* in all *kṣetras*, Oh Bhārata. The knowledge of *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajña* is deemed by me as the knowledge." *Kṣetrajña* is the Self, and *kṣetra* which means the body is the not-Self. The Lord elucidates the nature of the not-Self, *kṣetra*, by mentioning the elements which are all modifications of matter as well as the internal organ and its different forms and characteristics. He says: "The great elements, *ahaṅkāra*, the intellect, the *avyakta*, the ten senses and one, and the five objects of the senses, desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, courage — thus the *kṣetra* has been briefly described with its modifications." (XIII, 5-6). What is the Self or *kṣetrajña*? *Kṣetrajña* is explained as follows: "That which knows the body is designated as *kṣetrajña* by those who know them." (XIII, 1).

So according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is necessary to know the distinction between the Self and the not-Self, *kṣetrajña* and *kṣetra*. To know anything else is indeed ignorance; and to be in possession of those qualities which are not conducive to the attainment of the right knowledge, is to be under the sway of ignorance. The *Gītā* says, distinguishing knowledge from ignorance: "This is declared to be knowledge, and what is opposed to it is ignorance."

There is a close link between metaphysics and the ethical discipline. Śaṅkara's insistence on the importance of *jñāna-yoga*

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as the means to the attainment of Brahman-realisation is based on a very simple, but a profound truth with which we are familiar in our day-to-day experience. But it was given to a great mastermind like Śaṅkara, who evolved from it a theory of great metaphysical significance taking his stand on the authority of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In all his numerous writings — whether they be his commentaries on the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Brahma-sūtra* or his celebrated minor works — Śaṅkara sticks to this basic position with unswerving conviction. It is a matter of common knowledge that when we are ignorant about something we endeavour to remove that ignorance by gaining the true knowledge of that object. Take the familiar case of mistaking a rope which is in front for a snake. Not knowing the real nature of the object in front, a person thinks that it is a snake and begins to run away in fear. Ignorance of the real nature of the object is the cause of his thinking of it as a snake and the subsequent reactions in him like sweating, running away in fear and so on. It is not enough if he is told that the object in front is not a snake. The statement that it is not a snake does not serve to remove his ignorance of the object in front. Perhaps he has known to some extent what it is not. But this does not mean that his ignorance has been removed. His ignorance can be removed only by attaining the knowledge of the object in front, *viz.*, the rope. In short, it is knowledge and knowledge alone that removes ignorance in the same way as light removes darkness.

Śaṅkara's contention that *jñāna-yoga* is the direct means to the attainment of Brahman-realisation, which is release is thus based upon what we experience in our day-to-day life. He has shown that this basic principle, *viz.* that knowledge is the antidote to all ignorance holds good not only with regard to removing our ordinary ignorance as exemplified in our mistaking a rope for a snake, but also in overcoming the metaphysical or foundational ignorance from which we suffer.

Man finds himself in the ever-revolving wheel of activity which makes him sick at heart. Not being able to escape from it, he plunges deep into it developing time-consciousness. Everything that he does is according to the time-schedule. Even the relation which he is supposed to have is according to the time-schedule. All the time, he is involved in action whether outward or inward. In the words of Lord Krishna: "None verily even for an instant ever remains doing no action; for everyone is driven

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helpless to action by the energies born of Nature." (III, 5)

It is desire that is the cause of all action, good or bad. It does not matter whether we do an action enjoyed by scripture or prohibited by it. In every case there is the desire to attain some end or other; and it is desire which prompts one to do some action through deed, speach or thought. What, then, is the cause of desire? According to Śaṅkara desire arises due to the ignorance of the real nature of the Self. Desire relates to the non-Self. When a person attains the knowledge of the Self, when a person realises that there is only the Self and nothing else separate from it that can be desired, he becomes one without desires (*akāmaḥ*), one who is free from desires (*niṣkāmaḥ*). Since a man who has realised his identity with all has nothing to desire, he cannot perform the rites. Ignorance of the real nature of the non-dual *Brahman-Ātman* is the root cause of bondage; and this ignorance is, therefore, characterised as foundational or metaphysical ignorance. The attainment of Brahman-knowledge removes ignorance, and the removal of ignorance results in the overcoming of bondage. The causal chain, therefore, proceeds from ignorance to desire, from desire to action and so on.

A complete enumeration of the several links of the causal chain will be as follows: From ignorance arises the defect (*doṣa*) in the form of desire and aversion; from these there arises action (*pravṛtti*) towards the *dharma* and *adharma*; and from action there results birth (*janma*), and consequent on birth there is misery (*duḥkha*). Liberation consists in the removal of *avidyā* and its results. The *Nyāya-sūtra*, I, 1, ii, which Śaṅkara quotes, sets forth the causal chain starting from *avidyā* and ending in *duḥkha* as follows: "duhkha-janma-pravṛtti-doṣa-mithyā jñānānām uttarottarāpāye tadanantarāpāyāt apavargaḥ."

In order to appreciate that *jñāna* is the direct means to the attainment of Brahman-realisation, it is necessary to keep in mind the means-end relation. The means that we choose must be suitable and appropriate to the end which we want to attain. It is not the case that through any means any end can be attained. The means to be chosen must be appropriate to the end. The choice of the means is determined by the end. This point must be borne in mind in understanding the significance of *jñāna-yoga* as explained by Śaṅkara.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (IV, 37-38) points out that knowledge is the means by which the fetters of bondage are broken and that

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there is nothing equal to knowledge. It says: "As a kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, Oh Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. Verily, there exists here no purifier equal to wisdom. He who has perfected by yoga finds out in time in himself by himself."

It is the same idea that is brought out in the *Upaniṣads*. The *Chandogya* (VII, 1,i ii) declares: "The knower of the Self goes beyond grief." Tne *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (II, 1, i,) says: "The knower of Brahman attains the highest." That knowledge is the only means to realise Brahman and that there is no other means for realising it, is clearly stated in a text of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (III, 8): "I know the Supreme person of sunlike colour, beyond the darkness. Only by knowing him does one pass over death. There is no other path for going there." In the introduction to his commentary on the *Gītā*, Śaṅkara observes that "the aim of this famous *Gītā-śāstra* is briefly the supreme good, the complete cessation of bondage and of its cause. This results from a state of devotion to the knowledge of the Self preceded by a renunciation of all works." The illusory serpent cannot be destroyed by means of a stick. It can be destroged only by knowing the truth that the object in front is only a rope. The fear caused by the illusory serpent can be removed, not by medicine, not by *mantra*; it can be removed only by the knowledge of the object in front. In the same way, one can be cured of the bite of the serpent of *ajñāna* only by the knowledge of Brahman, and not by the *Vedas*, not by the *śāstras*, not by the *mantras*, and not even by herbs.

What is the means by which Brahman-knowledge can be obtained? This question is answered in the *Bhagavad-gītā* in XIII, 7-11. The possession of the following virtues is conducive to the attainment of Brahman-knowledge: (1) Humility, (2) modesty, (3) non-violence, (4) patience, (5) uprightness, (6) service to the teacher, (7) purity, (8) steadfastness, (9) self-control, (10) dispassion, (11) absence of egoism, (12) perception of evil in birth, death, old-age, sickness and pain, (13) unattachment, (14) absence of attachment for son, wife, etc. (15) eqaunimity, (16) devotion to God, (17) resort to solitude (18) avoiding the company of the unenlightened, (19) constancy in self-knowledge, and (20) contemplation on *mokṣa*, which is the end to be attained by knowledge.

The four-fold condition of eligibility formulated by Śaṅkara for the study of the *Upaniṣads* sums up all these 20 virtues listed

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in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the course of his commentary, Śaṅkara remarks that the mature development of virtues snch as humility leads to knowledge.

While Śaṅkara fully recognises the importance of *karma-yoga* in its own way, he is emphatic that the attainment of liberation which is the highest good falls directly within the scope of *jñāna-yoga* alone, and that nothing can vouchsafe for us this goal excepting the immediate and direct knowledge of Brahman-Ātman.

IV

The *Mīmāṁsā* view that liberation can be attained by means of *karma* alone or by means of the combination of *karma* and *jñāna* is not acceptable.

Let us first consider why liberation cannot be attained by means of *karma*. Liberation consists in realising the true nature of the Self as the eternal non-dual reality. It is a matter of common knowledge that anything which is produced by action is impermanent (*anitya*). If liberation were the result of *karma*, then it will be impermanent, and such a state is not really desirable. As Sureśvara puts it: "Since release is unalterable, eternal, *karma* is not a means to that. If it were the result of *karma*, like heaven etc., it will not be eternal." (*Taittirīya-vārtika*, I, 24).

There is also another reason for rejecting this view. *Karma* involves duality in the form of means and end, doer and deed. The perception of duality is ignorance. Further, it is only a person who has desire performs *karma*. Since he is ignorant of the non-dual Self, he thinks that there are objects other than the Self which he should strive for. In short, *karma* presupposes desire, involves duality, and is therefore a product of *avidyā*. If so, how can it destroy *avidyā*, the root cause of bondage and thereby bring about liberation?

The futility of *karma* in respect of attaining release can be shown in another way. Whenever we do any action, it is for the sake of production (*utpatti*), or purification (*saṁskāra*), or transformation (*vikāra*), or attainment (*āpti*). That is, *karma* can produce or perform or transform or bring within reach something. Apart from these four, a fifth use of *karma* cannot be thought of. From the point of any of these four uses, *karma* is of no use for attaining liberation. Remaining in one's own true form is release; that is, realising the true nature of the Self which is ever-existent is release. So release is not something to be produced, for it is eternal (*nityatvāt*). It is not something to be purified, for it is

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bereft of all qualities and impurities (*nirguṇatvāt, nirdoṣatvāt ca*). There is also another reason here. It cannot be purified since it is not a means (*asādhana-dravyātmakatvāt*). Only a thing that serves as a means can be purified as a sacrificial vessel or clarified butter by sprinkling water and so on. It is not something to be transformed, for it is immutable (*kūṭasthatvāt*). It is not something to be done, for it is already existent as the Self of everyone. Attainment is possible only with regard to something which is different from us, which is outside us, which is not within our reach. Since liberation consists in being identical with the Self, which is non-dual, there is no question of attainment in this sense.

Reference has already been made to the problem of the combination of *karma* and knowledge. From the way in which Arjuna asks Krishna to tell him that one path by means of which he can attain the highest goal, it is obvious that the combination of *karma* and knowledge at the same time has to be ruled out. *Karma* and knowledge are opposed to each other like light and darkness. Śaṅkara says that the antithesis between knowledge and *karma* is irremovable like a mountain. From the very distinction that is made between the two paths it is unmistakably clear that the two are quite different and that they cannot be combined at the same time. There is a special excellence about the path of knowledge; and so the *jñānī*, the enlightened man, is rated very high, when compared with other devotees. Reference is made to four kinds of devotees who worship the supreme God — the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the wise man (VII, 16). Of these four kinds of virtuous men, the Lord says (VII, 17) that the wise man is the best, even though all the other three kinds of men are great. The enlightened man is the best of the whole lot, is excessively dear to the Supreme, because he is the very Self; by his knowledge, he remains as the Self, and not as different from the Self. (VII, 18).

Release or perfection is not something to be attained in a distant future in some other life. It is not a prophecy of the future, making its attainment doubtful. On the contrary, it is what can be achieved here and now, provided a spiritual aspirant makes himself eligible for that by fulfilling the requirements therefor and pursues the path of knowledge. In other words, *jñāna* gives us *dṛṣṭa-phala*, a perceptible result now itself. This is one noteworthy feature which brings out the great excellence of *jñāna-yoga*. *Jñāna-yoga* leads to perfection, which is otherwise

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called release or *mokṣa*. For one who has attained this goal, *viz.*, perfection, here and now, there is nothing else to be done by him; for he has realized Brahman-Ātman; he remains as Brahman-Ātman which is immutable, and which is, therefore, free from action. Such a one is spoken of as a man of wisdom (*dhīraḥ*), one who has given up all actions (*sarva-ārambha-parityāgī*), one who has transcended the three *guṇas* (*guṇātītaḥ*), one who is steady in knowledge (*sthitaprajñaḥ*). For such a person who rejoices in the Self, who is satisfied with the Self, who is content in the Self alone, there is nothing to be done (III, 17). Such a person who is a *jīvanmukta*, who is a personality without frontiers, is, by his mere presence in society, a solace to the suffering mankind, a beacon-light for guiding others in darkness; he is, to use a significant expression of T.S. Eliot, "the still point of the turning world". In himself he is "the still point"; and we who are the sons of Martha and who constitute the turning world, go around him. The concept of *jīvanmukti* which forms an integral part of the theory of *jñāna-yoga* is another noteworthy feature of *jñāna-yoga*.

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26

THE IDEA OF SPIRITUAL VALUE

S. L. PANDEY

Since the rise of science and scientific outlook in the seventeenth century, there has been taking place a continuous erosion of religious values in the West. Nietzsche's dictum that God is dead has virtually declared the death of religion. With the idea of God as dropped from the explanation of the external world, social order and human personality, most of the philosophers, let alone scientists, argue that there is no spiritual value at all and that all values are materialistic and relative to social, economic, political and psychological conditions of the human beings who seek them in the normal course of their life. They equate the spiritual value with the religious value and therefore their condemnation of religion is tantamount to the condemnation, or even elimination, of the spiritual value. This spiritual crisis is the logical nemesis of the contemporary Western *Weltanschauung* that has become the most dominant fashion among the intellectuals of the whole world today.

But the religions of the East that are not God-centred are not affected by this crisis. For example, Buddhism and Jainism are religions without God. They refute the equation of spiritual value with religious value and argue that spiritual value is to be sharply distinguished from faith in God, devotion to God and God-realization. Their impact on the Western *Weltanschauung* is, therefore, compelling it to redefine the spiritual value or spirituality which is other than the materialistic life related to the social milieu of its seekers.

But despite their emphasis on spiritual value as distinct from religious value, Buddhism and Jainism have landed into another sort of confusion, for they do not make a neat distinction between spiritual value and moral value. They are rightly regarded and interpreted as ethical religions and as such they are undoubtedly successful in establishing the verve and power of moral values over all other values. Nonetheless, moral values are

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multiple in nature. They are also characterised by prohibitive asceticism and denial. Hence these religions give rise to moral pluralism or nihilism that becomes harmful to social solidarity and personal integrity which need, *inter alia*, a commitment to one supreme value that is life-affirming. The Vedānta of Śaṅkara fulfils this need. It also removes the afore-mentioned double confusion about the identification of spiritual value, since it declares unequivocally that there is only one spiritual value that is distinct from both religious value and moral value, and that it is to be identified with self-realization. There is no value that is greater or higher than it. No gain or achievement is higher than self-attainment ("*ātmalābhāt paro nānyo lābhaḥ kaścana vidyate*" — *Upadeśasāhasrī*, II. 17. 4).

But there is a paradox about self-attainment, for the self, in fact, is not attainable as it is ever attained. Here Śaṅkara shares a sort of scepticism and pleads that moral and religious values are not ultimate, for in his estimate they are subject to change, modification and annihilation. Moreover, they are attributes or merits which are acquired *ab extra* (*upādeya*). The spiritual value, on the contrary, is free from these characteristics. It is not destructible, modifiable and producible,. It is ingrained inherently in the nature of consciousness that is called the self in Advaita Vedānta. Its attainment is virtually the attainment or recognition of what is eternally attained (*nitya-prāptasya prāptiḥ*). When the edifice of error is demolished completely by the bulldozer of knowledge, the self-effulgent consciousness bursts forth over all objects of knowledge spontaneously, and the intellect that was confined to the body (*dehātmadhī*)immediately becomes the intellect encompassing the whole universe of infinity (*brahmātmādhī*).

So if there is no self-realization, then all other values become disvalues, because they concern the glorification of the not-self only. Whatever is valuable is valuable only because it is for the sake of self-realization. No self-realization, no value. If value, then Self-realization. Such are the aphoristic formulations of the Vedāntic concept of value that is found in the works of Śaṅkara.

This concept of value is, for example, clearly formulated in a small tract titled *Anātmaśrīvigarhaṇam* (The Censure of Materialistic Values) that is attributed to Śaṅkara. Here he explains how self-realization is the only spiritual value and how it is sharply distinguished from religious, moral, political, economic and social values. Some of his observations may be cited here to illustrate

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the unique characteristic of spiritual value.

Distinguishing spiritual value from moral value Śaṅkara says, "Even if you have conquered sex, anger, greed, envy, egoism and delusion, what is the worth of this conquest if you have no self-realization?" This exhortation of Śaṅkara clearly makes a sharp distinction between the spiritual value of Self-realization and the moral value of the victory over the six enemies of human nature. The moral values themselves are not the end of human life. They are just the means of self-realization that is the only end of human life. Furthermore, he says in the same context: "Even if you have become a king, a respectable social leader or a religious divine, what is the worth of this achievement if you have no self-realization?"

Thus the great Ācārya distinguishes between the spiritual value and the social, political and religious values. He again says: "you have defeated your enemies in a battle, got good friends in society and achieved miraculous powers (*siddhis*) through Yoga, what is the worth of these achievements if you have no self-realization?" Similarly he argues that profound scholarship, charity, meditation, luxurious living and honourable status in society are all worthless if there is no self-realization. Thus according to Śaṅkara, self-realization is the only spiritual value which at the same time is the pervasive feature of all other values.

Now this distinction between the spiritual value and the religious value may be pursued a little further to articulate the nature of either of them. It is well-known that Śaṅkara founded not only Advaita Vedānta Order, but also gave his approval to the six sects of Hinduism — Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Śāktism, Gāṇāpatyam, Sauram and Kaumāram. These sects are the different ways of achieving the same religious values, such as charity, meditation, penance, faith in a deity, devotion to the deity, social solidarity, holiness and the like. But these values are only extrinsic and so they are only means for self-realization. The value of self-realization, *i.e.*, the spiritual value, however, is perfectly compatible with the religious values of every sect. That is also the *sine qua non* of the unity of all religions or sects, as fundamentally it is the touchstone of the value of a religion.

The Advaitic dictum that *bhakti* is cultivated for the sake of wisdom (*bhaktir-jñānāya kalpate*) gives a principle of synthesis that accommodates religion with philosophy, theism or with absolutism, and the way of faith with the way of knowledge. In the

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parlance of Advaita Vedānta, the religious values are objective, action-oriented, phenomenal and personal, whereas the spiritual value is subjective, knowledge-based, transcendental and impersonal. The former is a mental construct or *kalpita*, while the latter is the genuine recognition of all that is real (*vastu*). It is true that Śaṅkara takes Buddhism, Jainism and Kāpālika sect as *pūrva-pakṣa* only for the development of his philosophy of value and hence does not accord them the same status that he gives to the six sects of Hinduism mentioned above. But this is largely due to the fact that these religions themselves deserved this sort of treatment since very vainly they did not accept the validity of the *Vedas* and tried to oppose the Vedic way of life tooth and nail. If they, however, make amends, Śaṅkara is prepared to have an accord with them. He may give them the status of a religion *vis-a-vis* philosophy provided they also respond to his spirit of accommodation. He is undoubtedly for a multi-religious and open society as it is evident from his acquiescence to six sects of Hinduism. But he is against nihilism, fanaticism, bigotry, racism, ritualism, fundamentalism, rigorism and formalism which mislead the common people from their goal of self-realization and create tensions and conflicts in their society. Anything that takes man away from his final goal of self realization is positively harmful to him and his society.

If Śaṅkarācārya's formulation of the synthesis of religious value and spiritual value is accepted as it should, then all religious, let alone Buddhism, Jainism and Kāpālika, sects can be perfectly adjusted to Advaita Vedānta. This is what Sureśvara, one of the four great disciples of the Ācārya has attempted in his *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāṣyavārtika.* In modern times the advocates of Advaita Vedānta including the present author have worked out this sort of synthesis all over again. Advaita Vedānta has thus become the philosophy of the essential unity of all religions. It is the only religion of mental worship (*mānasī pūjā*). Śaṅkara explicitly states that the self is God, intellect is His spouse, vital airs are His companions, the body is the temple, all that is enjoyed is His worship, sleep is the state of *samādhi*, walking is the circumambulation of the temple, all speech or utterance is the prayer to God, all that is done by a person is nothing but worship of the Lord (*Parā Pūjā*, 10). Can there be a better way of sublimating the normal activities of a human being and directing them to the divine life? It is the discipline of mental worship

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that has made Advaita Vedānta the universal philosophy of all religions or the only religion of philosophy. The gap that is created by a religious sect between religion and philosophy has been fully filled in by the Vedānta of Śaṅkarācārya which can hardly be replaced by any of its rivals at its enviably pristine position.

There are, however, two distinct ways of life. The first is the life before self-realization and the second, the life after self-realization. Whatever is done before self-realization is again of two sorts. First, all that is done to gain self-realization directly or indirectly is valuable and hnce commendable and good. Secondly, all work that is done for anything else is just an exercise in futility, a sheer wastage of the present human life as it further increases its suffering and bondage. It is, therefore, evil. These two types of life, one good and the other evil, are described by Śrī Śaṅkara very clearly in his *Mohamudgara-stotra*. (In Praise of the Hammer to Infatuation). It states: "Day and night, evening and morning, winter and spring, come again and again. Time is rolling on. Age is declining. But the life of desire is not coming to an end." This type of life is obviously not praiseworthy. Śaṅkara exhorts us to give up this mode of life and attain freedom from desire. He says, "Oh deluded person, give up your zest for wealth, acquire right understanding and achieve freedom from desire. Enjoy every moment of your life with whatever you earn with your labour. Lead a life of contentment." This is, in short, the needed precept for leading a moral life that culminates into the spiritual life. In his *Śārīrakabhāṣya* Śaṅkara discusses the prerequisites of the spiritual life and calls them the four means (*sādhana-catuṣṭaya*) that are regarded as the *sine qua non* of moral preparation for receiving spiritual wisdom. Out of them *mumukṣutva* is the most important means. It is the burning desire for freedom, liberation, self-rule, perfect peace or summum bonum. It can also be described as the strong sense of spiritual value.

Similarly the life after self-realization is also of two types. First, a self-realized man may do nothing and go on enjoying the state of his self-realization within himself. This type of life is elaborately described in the *Siddhāntabindu*. This is the life of non-action. It is also called the life of pure Reason, the same pure reason that was analysed by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. It is to be noted in this context that Vācaspati Miśra, a commentator of Śaṅkara's *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*, has called the great Advaita Ācārya as the personification of pure reason (Cp. *natvā*

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viśuddhavijñānaṁ Śaṅkaraṁ karuṇākaraṁ, *Bhāmatī*, benedictory verse 6). Śaṅkara himself described this type of his life in a short monograph titled *Svātma-prakāśikā* (Exposition of my own Self) which appears to be a sort of his spiritual autobiography. Therein he says:

Only consciousness is his body
Only consciousness is his universe
Only consciousness is his world of objects
Only consciousness is his system of sense organs
Only consciousness is his agency and personality
Only consciousness is his inner sense
Only consciousness is his ultimate reality,
The ultimate truth and the ultimate value.

Furthermore, the *Bhagavadgītā* says that the life of non-action is, in fact, a life of all action, for the self-realized man identifies himself with everything that is in the universe. He is behind every event that is happening there. But how does such a self-realized person perform all actions is a mystery to those who have no taste of self-realization. Neither Śaṅkara nor the *Bhagavadgītā* recommends this type of life to everybody. On the other hand, they recommend the second type of life that is led by a self-realized person like King Janaka and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or for that matter, like Śrī Śaṅkarācārya himself, to some extent. This type of life is an active life of social service without any desire for its fruits. It is a life of non-attachment as well as the performance of duties. In short, it is the life of dedication to the cause of social solidarity (*lokasaṅgraha*) and lends its support to a sort of altruism or ideal utilitarianism.

But how is it possible? How can an ideal utilitarianism be combined with the life of non-attachment? Here the answer is the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgītā* that has been included by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in the triple sources of Vedānta. The philosophy of the *Bhagavadgītā* as explained by him has epitomized the quintessence of social philosophy of Advaita Vedānta. During the last several hundred years or so, it has preserved the value of self-realization and maintained that *svadharma* and *varṇa-dharma*, or spiritual value and the performance of one's duties according to one's station and status in society may be combined together and ought to be accomplished simultaneously. Before issuing any precepts to somebody, everybody ought to practise them himself. Those who do not follow this Vedāntic rule are unauthentic per-

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sons and do immense harm to society and their own self. They are called *ātmahā*, *i.e.*, those who kill themselves. The greatest evil is this omission of self-realization, for it defies the very purpose of human life.

If we compare the life after self-realization with that which was before it, we may notice an apocalyptic change. Self-realization brings about a radical transformation of personality. A self-realized man does not run after the objects of the external world; his sense-organs are inverted and reoriented to the inner world. His sense-perception undergoes a total change and becomes one with what is known in Western epistemology as intellectual intuition. He becomes a *samadarśin*, *i.e.*, one who sees the presence of his own self in each and every thing of the world, a *svarāṭ*, *i.e.*, a master of himself in the true sense of self-rule, a *samrāṭ*, *i.e.*, a monarch or sovereign wielding far greater power than any ruler or king of the world. For him there is no difference, no inequality, no disharmony, no otherness. In short, nothing is *viṣama* (inharmonious) for him. There is no bondage for him and there is no ruler over him. He sees himself in everything, and everything in himself. This inverted perception animated with an absorbing sense of participation shows that self-realization is cognitive in its nature. Consequently the spiritual value that is identified with it, is absolutely cognitive.

The self-realised man is the realized being of consciousness. He does not feel any emotion or sentiment like love (*rāga*) or anguish (*śoka*). As a matter of fact, all his emotions and desires are burnt up through his penances (*tapas*) and are attuned to his self-luminous being that is pure consciousness. He witnesses the disappearance of his own mind (*manonāśa*) and the annihilation of all his desires (*vāsanākṣaya*). Thus he becomes pure consciousness and does not deviate even for a moment from it. Śaṅkara describes this life in the following words: "Consciousness is his body. Consciousness is his society. Consciousness is his world. Consciousness is his sense-organs and motor organs. Consciousness is his agency. Consciousness is his inner sense. Consciousness is the absolute Value." Such a man is called *Jīvanmukta* (a liberated in life), *Sthitaprajña* (a man of settled intellect), *Siddha*, *Brahmavit* (knower of Brahman) or *Ātmavit* (knower of Self). He is not only free and peaceful, but he is freedom itself and he is peace itself. His freedom is freedom from all desires and emotions, from all conation and affection, on the one hand, and from all dualities of

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the knower and the known on the other hand. It has neither name nor form. It is existence, consciousness, or bliss. Śaṅkara aptly states that among the five characteristics of reality, existence (it is), consciousness (it appears), bliss (it gives pleasures), name (it is described) and form (it occupies space and time), the first three characteristics constitute the nature of the self and the last two are attributed to the world. Finally, on further and deeper analysis it is discovered that the worldly life is known as a disvalue, and the self, as the only value. What is disvalue is unreal and what is value is real. So the self, being the only value, is also at the same time the only reality.

The life of existence, consciousness or bliss, or in short, the life of *saccidānanda* as it is called in Vedānta is totally different from the course of ordinary human life that is based on sense-experience and animal sensibility. Those who lead a life of animal sensibility or passions can hardly imagine the type and the pleasures of the life of *saccidānanda*. Our poets and visionaries, however, have tried to give a picture of this life in their works. That picture is very sublime and stimulating. But it is not the life of *saccidānanda*. It is only a faint image, copy of picture of that life which can be illustrated by a *jīvanmukta* alone. This picture is drawn from a distance and lacks the power and peace that accompany self-realization. On a deeper analysis, it is further discovered that the life of a *jīvanmukta* cannot be described, but only discerned, cannot be shown but only shared, cannot be loved but only lived, for it is participation in consciousness or existence (*satsaṅga*) and not predication about consciousness or existence (*sat-prakāratā*).

It has been, however, argued that a *jīvanmukta* behaves like an ordinary person in the course of his daily activities. But he is not what he appears to be. Apparently he may look like an ordinary person. But in reality he is Brahman, the infinite, the being, the existence, the primal source of all that is there. It is the power that rules the universe. This authentic life of the *jīvanmukta* can be apperceived or intuited only by those who have a sense of spiritual value. It is really free from *samādhi* and *vikṣepa*, from silence and projection which are like the waves in the ocean of consciousness. Advaita Vedānta is very particular in its espousal that consciousness *qua* numerical unity of existence is indivisible (*akhaṇḍa*) and seamless (*ekarasa*).

At this juncture we may take Arjuna of the *Bhagavadgītā* as

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the ideal man, for he got a vision of the self and lived up to it. Before receiving it, he lost his previous senses and personality and was granted new senses and new personality. It caused the death of his animal sensibility and turned over a new leaf in his life. He got self-realization as a gift of God's grace. That was his new birth in consciousness, as different from his old birth with consciousness. The man who was endowed with new senses and new personality during self-realization was, however, not a man of animal sensibility. But Arjuna was not prepared to give up his animal sensibility. So he voluntarily opted for it and returned to it with a changed perspective. He became the same Arjuna of pre-realization stage and recovered his old memories and personal identity. Yet his rationality was transformed. A revolutionary change overtook him and he started to discharge his obligations and duties aright with a new idea of consciousness and a new conviction. This changed Arjuna is the ideal of all persons who engage themselves in the performance of duties *a la* self-realization. So the synthesis of *svadharma* and *varṇadharma* is fully illustrated in the life of Arjuna. We need simply to analyse his conduct in the war of the *Mahābhārata* to understand the relevance of the realization of spiritual value for the present life.

Every man is really in the role of Arjuna. His life situation is the *Mahābhārata* for him. His own sense of spiritual value is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the friend, philosopher and guide. So the message of the *Bhagavadgītā* is always relevant to him. So long as man remains a serious seeker of values, the spiritual value can never be out of date or surpassed, because it is the value-making spirit of man. Those who have eliminated the spiritual value while retaining all other values have committed a fallacy, for they see a colour but deny the existence of light or vision. The idea of spiritual value, though closely related to the idea of self, is different from the idea of the embodied self, and is unlike everything that is an item of objective knowledge. It is beyond the purview of ordinary perception. But it is accessible to those who make an enquiry into its nature and utility. The moment it is understood, the knower becomes a *jīvanmukta* and the secrets of the whole universe are disclosed to him immediately. He accomplishes all that is worth accomplishing and nothing remains for him to accomplish further. That is why he is called a *siddha* (an Accomplished Person). He has achieved freedom with peace and power and knowledge with the good of the ought (*kṛtakṛtyatā*).

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As a common man realizes that his idea of self is modelled on his embodied self, so a *jīvanmukta* realizes that his idea of self is patterned on the absolute reality. His self is not confined to his body alone. As a matter of fact it transcends his body and encompasses the whole universe, for it is identical with the very soul of the universe, the creative principle of all that is there, with *Tat* (That) appearing before him. The more he intensifies his identification with the absolute through constant reflection, discussion and contemplation, the more perceptive, powerful and peaceful he becomes. Indeed, when he has realized his self, all of his obligations are thereby fulfilled, for there is nothing more for him to accomplish. His life becomes the life of value itself. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman — *brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 2, 2, 9). The people may or may not regard him as God incarnate, but he is not God. For deification of man in his perception is a dangerous fallacy which is to be avoided for understanding the state of his self-realization which is called *brāhmī-sthiti*, the state of being in itself irrelative to anything else.

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27

ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA — THE GREAT DEVOTEE OF LORD VIṢṆU

D. N. SHANBAG

I

A study of the sacred literature in Sanskrit reveals the supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu. But it is also a fact that Viṣṇu appears to occupy a minor position in Vedic pantheon. In the words of Macdonell, "This deity occupies a subordinate position in the R.V., being celebrated in only five or six hymns."[1] In this connection, the warning sounded by Sri Aurobindo deserves attention: "The importance of the Vedic gods has not to be measured by the number of hymns devoted to them or by the extent to which they are invoked in the thoughts of the Rishis, but by the functions which they perform."[2] As B. N. K. Sharma rightly states: "In the opinion of modern scholars, however, Viṣṇu occupies but a subordinate position in the vedic pantheon. He is lauded in far fewer hyms than addressed to other gods like Varuṇa, Indra and Agni." He is celebrated in not more than five whole hymns (*sūktas*) and in part of another and his name occurs only about a hundred times altogether in the *Ṛgveda* (Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 37). In a large number of short passages, he is introduced just as one among a crowd of divinities from which he is in no way distinguished. Further, the *Ṛgveda* contains numerous hymns in which the *Ṛṣis* ascribe to Indra, Varuṇa and other gods, the same transcendental attributes and functions as to Viṣṇu. But it is conceded that "his personality there, is, at the same time, more important than would appear from the statistical standard alone" (Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 37).[3] A. B. Keith remarks: "It would be impossible to deny to Viṣṇu the position of a great god in the period of the Ṛgveda."[4] After examining pertinent evidences B. N. K. Sharma concludes: "From the beginning, then Viṣṇu appears to have been marked out for a great future. The opening line of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* of *Ṛgveda*:

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agnirvai devānām-avamo
viṣṇuḥ paramaḥ; tadantarā sarvā devatāḥ

bears testimony to the fact that by the close of the Ṛg Vedic period, Viṣṇu had definitely come to be accepted as the head of the Vedic pantheon. No wonder that he had earlier attained to a position of such warm affection in the hearts of the seers as to be thought of and mentioned in terms of high regard in monotheistic circles: i.164.36. Monotheism is the acknowledgement and worship of the one true God. It implies a denial of other gods at any rate, of their jurisdiction over the Cosmos."[5] In the words of R. N. Dandekar, "There must have been some elements in the original nature and personality of Viṣṇu which definitely made him at one time an all important god."[6]

Now coming to the *Ṛgveda*, it is quite relevant to note that it asserts the over-all supremacy of Viṣṇu as can be seen from the following among other statements:

(i) *tadviṣṇoḥ paramam padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ* (1.22.70)

(Supreme is the abode of Viṣṇu; it is always witnessed by the Liberated.)

(ii) *viṣṇornukaṁ vīryāṇi pravocaṁ yaḥ*
pārthivāni vimame rajāṁsi
yo askabhāyaduttaraṁ sadasthaṁ
vicakramāṇastredhorugāyaḥ (*Ṛv.* I. 154. 1)

[What man, be he even one with the genius to count up the dust-particles of the earth, can reckon up the (unimaginable) glories of the All-pervading Viṣṇu, universally hymned, who holds aloft the Heaven of Heavens and who bestrode (the whole cosmos) in three paces?[7]]

(iii) *urukramasya sa hi bandhuritthā viṣṇoḥ pade parame*
madhva utsaḥ (I. 154.5)

(In that supreme realm of Viṣṇu, the Great Bestrider, we have ever-bubbling founts of bliss; this is why Viṣṇu is to us the nearest of kin.)

(iv) *viṣṇurgopāḥ paramaṁ pāti pāthaḥ*
priyā dhāmānyamṛtā dadhānaḥ (III. 55.10)

(Viṣṇu, the All-Protector, ever maintains His Supreme nature — always master of infinite powers, powers superb and immortal.)

(v) *paro mātrayā tanvā vṛdhāna na te mahitvam-anvaśnuvanti*
(VII. 99. 1)

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[(O Viṣṇu,) when Thou assumest Thy form in its inconceivable vastness, Thou art infinitely beyond all bounds; none can apprehend Thy greatness even most remotely.]

(vi) *na te viṣṇo jāyamāno na jāto deva mahimnaḥ paramantam āpa* (VII. 99.2)

[Viṣṇu, Divine Lord! none in the past had so much as even the faintest glimpses of even the hithermost fringe of Thy greatness; nor has anyone now living.]

These and other statements extol the supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu.

Similar is the case with the Brāhmaṇas and the *Upaniṣads*. It is well known that for the seers of the Brāhmaṇas, *Yajña* or sacrifice was the all-in-all. And by identifying Viṣṇu with Yajña they admit the over-all supremacy of Viṣṇu.[8] When we come to the *Upaniṣads*, they too proclaim the *paramapada* of Viṣṇu. The famous example is of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*: (II. 8-9): "He who has the proper knowledge, full control over the mind and is ever pure (in conduct) certainly attains that Abode (of Viṣṇu) from where there is no return (to this mundane existence). He, who has the proper knowledge as charioteer and the controlled mind as reins, reaches the other end of the path (of his life) and that is the supreme abode of Viṣṇu."

The *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* proclaim Viṣṇu's supremacy. In the *Mahābhārata* we come across references which clearly indicate the all-pervasive character of Viṣṇu which was adored so characteristically in the *Veda* and commanded the same reputation in the Epic period also.[9] The *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*,[10] the two prominent portions of the great epic are conclusive proofs of the over-all supremacy of Viṣṇu. Among the *Purāṇas*, the *Nārada-purāṇa* informs that in the Kṛtayuga or the ideal era of human society, all people were always devoted to Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu.[11] The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa's* name itself is meaningful in this context. The *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa* also glorifies the highest abode of Viṣṇu which is yearned by aspirants to reach in order to enjoy the bliss of liberation.[12]

All these evidences are sufficient to prove that Viṣṇu by His very nature and functioning commands the highest place and universal reverence and devotion from every objective thinker and seeker of final emancipation. And Śaṅkara being such a devotee there is no surprise that he possessed in his heart of heart utmost devotion to Lord Viṣṇu.

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But this contention will not be easily acceptable to those who have understood Śaṅkara as only a philosopher who proclaimed Brahman or the Highest Being or God to be pure sentiency without any qualities, attributes or form and the like (*nirguṇa*, *nirviśeṣa*, *nirākāra*, etc.) and they believe that he advocated the philosophy of an Impersonal God and also Brahman-knowledge to be the means of liberation. Or to be exact, liberation consists in the realization of Brahman-knowledge. Hence, according to them, Viṣṇu cannot be Brahman or the Highest Being of Śaṅkara.[13] Hence hereunder an attempt has been made to point out how he covertly and overtly extols the supremacy of Viṣṇu and equates Him with his Brahman.

II

First, one can take up for consideration Śaṅkara's commentary on Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtras*, which according to him deal with Brahman and also has the same import as that of the *Upaniṣad*.[14] It must be noted that Bādarāyaṇa has no *sūtra* equating his Brahman with Lord Viṣṇu. But some of the passages in Śaṅkarācārya's commentary indicate that he meant Lord Viṣṇu by his Brahman. He takes up for explanation the term *antaryāmin* (Indweller) occurring in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III. vii. 1-2)[15] and proves that the Indweller is the Paramātman or the Highest Soul.[16] Now who is this Paramātman? The Ācārya has not spelled out His name. But a clue can be found in his commentary on the same passage in the said *Upaniṣad*, where he states:

> "*ya īdṛg-īśvaro nārāyaṇākhyaḥ pṛthivīṁ pṛthivīdevatāṁ yamayati niyamayati svavyāpāre...*

(Such a Lord named Nārāyaṇa controls the presiding deity of the earth-element in its functioning.)

In the '*smṛtyadhikaraṇa*' of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* also there is a mention of the Indweller who is equated with Nārāyaṇa: "If, on the ground of the fault of leaving no scope to certain Smṛtis, the view that the Lord is the cause is objected to, then in that case the other Smṛtis proclaiming the Lord as the cause would be void of any scope. We will cite these: Having introduced the Highest Brahman with the words (*Mahābhārata*, xii, 342, 30) — "That which is subtle and beyond knowledge", and having affirmed (*ibid.*, xii.342.31.) — "He is indeed the Inner soul of all being and is styled 'Knower of the Field' " the text declares (*ibid.*, xii. 342.32): "From Him, O Best of the twice-born, the Unevolved consisting of the three guṇas (aspects), sprang forth." Also

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in another place (*Ibid.*, xii. 347.31) — "The Unevolved, O Brahman, is absorbed into the Person who is free from Qualities." (And again), "Listen, accordingly, to this condensed statement: "The ancient Nārāyaṇa is all this; he creates everything at the creation-time and again consumes it (all) at the sublation-period." This is declared in the *Purāṇa* (*Cf.*, *Mahābhārata*, xii. 307.115). And in the *Bhagavadgītā* (vii. 6) it is said: "I am the source as also the dissolution of the entire world." Āpastamba (*Dharmasūtra*, i.8.23.2) likewise declares with reference to the very same Highest Soul: "From Him spring all bodies; He is the root, the eternal and the unchangeable." Thus in many a place even the Smṛtis show forth the Lord as being both the constituent and the efficient cause."[17]

It means that all the above passages quoted with approval by Śaṅkara confirm the import of the scriptures and are hence fully authoritative. Among these passages the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* passage asserts that Nārāyaṇa is the supermost God and His supremacy is the quintessence of all the scriptural teachings.

Moreover, in the last *adhikaraṇa*, *viz.*, the *utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa* of the second quarter of the second *adhyāya*, Śaṅkarācārya takes up for criticism the doctrines of the Bhāgavatas. But in the preliminary remarks he confesses,

> "*tatra yat-tāvad ucyate yo'sau nārāyaṇaḥ paro'vyaktāt-prasiddhaḥ paramātmā sarvātmā sa ātmanā ātmānam-anekadhā vyūhya avasthita iti, tanna nirākriyate...*"

Herein he clearly admits the overall superiority of Lord Viṣṇu and terms Him the Paramātman or the highest Soul.

Further, one can turn one's attention to the last *sūtra*, *viz.* "*anāvṛttiḥ śabdād-anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt*" (IV. iv. 22), where Bādarāyaṇa declares that the souls securing salvation do not return to this mundane world. The moot question is: Where do they depart and live for eternity enjoying the bliss of salvation? Śaṅkara directs us to a previous *sūtra* to discover that the abode on reaching which there is no return for ever. That *sūtra* is: "*kāryātyaye tadadhyakṣeṇa saha ataḥ paramabhidhānāt* (IV. iii. 10). According to Śaṅkarācārya, this *sūtra* contains an answer to the doubt whether the souls reaching the Brahmaloka of the divine abode of his Kāryabrahma secure final release from this mundane worldly existence. Because the seers of the *Upaniṣad* declare that only those reaching the Highest Brahman do not have any return to this world. Bādarāyaṇa replies that the souls who reach the Kāryabrahma-

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loka having secured the true knowledge go to the Viṣṇuloka which is pure and is the highest abode, together with the Kārya-brahma, *viz*. Hiraṇyagarbha. Thus they will never return to this mundane world.[18]

This means that Viṣṇu is the Highest Brahman; His *loka* is the highest abode to be reached by the liberated souls and there is no return to those souls when once they reach that abode; there they live for eternity enjoying the bliss of liberation. Under the next *sūtra* Śaṅkarācārya quotes with approval the *smṛti*-passage which confirms the going of the liberated to the Highest Abode together with Hiraṇyagarbha Brahman.[19] Thus Śaṅkara indicates Lord Viṣṇu to be the Highest Brahman in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*.

III

Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* is more specific. It must be noted that throughout he calls the *Gītā* as the *Gītāśāstra*[20] indicating thereby its sanctity as well as authority. He terms the *Gītā*-verses as *mantra*.[21] And he asserts that the *Gītā* contains the impact of the entire scriptures and thus its study helps to secure all the human goals.[22] In the introductory remarks of his commentary, he conveys the truth that Kṛṣṇa is Lord Viṣṇu Himself: When the vice overpowered the virtue and went on spreading, Lord Viṣṇu by name Nārāyaṇa the First Creator, with a desire to preserve the worldly order manifested Himself as Kṛṣṇa in Devakī by Vasudeva, to safeguard the worldly brahmanism. This supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu is repeated by Śaṅkarācārya in several places in his *Gītābhāṣya* even when the original does not demand it. Some statements are given hereunder:

He gives the meaning of the term *Bhaga*, while commenting on the name 'Bhagavān', where he quotes the well-known passages from the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* (VI. v. 74 & 78): "Complete sovereignty, valour, renown, lustre, renunciation and salvation — these six are connoted by the word '*Bhaga*'. These six have their permanent unimpeded and conjoint abode in Vāsudeva."[23] He who knows the origin, dissolution, coming and going of the creatures, knowledge and nescience, is fit to be called "Bhagavān" Hence, Vāsudeva who has the perfect knowledge of the origin and dissolution should be called Bhagavān."

Accordingly he quotes[24] with approval the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* passage "*yajño vai viṣṇuḥ*" indicating the supremacy of Viṣṇu. He interprets the terms denoting the supreme God as referring to

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only Viṣṇu.[25] He calls the *māyā* of the supreme Being as '*vaiṣṇavī māyā*'.[26] He condemns those who think Viṣṇu to be a lower deity and extols those who adore Him as the Supreme God.[27]

Thus a study of Śaṅkarācārya's *Gītābhāṣya* reveals his equation of the Supreme Being with Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa.

IV

Now coming to the Upaniṣads it is necessary to take them together with his *bhāṣya* on the *Viṣṇusahasranāma*[28] wherein he quotes passages from several *Upaniṣads* together with those from other authorities. Thereby he indicates that the Supreme Being described in the *Upaniṣads* is Viṣṇu only. Some examples may be quoted:

(i) *viśvam: viśvasya jagataḥ kāraṇatvena hi viśvam-ityucyate brahma. ...* (*The Adyar Library Bulletin* or *Brahmavīdyā*, vol. 43, 1979, pp. 65, 77);

(ii) *viṣṇuḥ: "kimekaṁ daivataṃ" ityārabhya ... ... yad-brahmoktaṁ tad-viśvaśabdena ucyate ... tatkimityākāṅkṣāyām āha viṣṇuriti. ... "āsya jānanto nāma ... viṣṇo! sumatim bajāmahe."... ityādivākyair viṣṇornāma-saṅkīrtanena samyag-jñāna prāptir-vihitā...*(*ibid.* pp. 87-89).

All these interpretations of the several names of Viṣṇu given by Śaṅkara reveal his belief that Viṣṇu alone is his Brahman. The fact that he quotes copiously Upaniṣadic passages to substantiate his interpretations indicates that according to him the Upaniṣadic Brahman is also Viṣṇu only. We have already seen how he names the *antaryāmin* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as Nārāyaṇa.

V

It is also a fact as expressly stated by Śaṅkara himself that his grand-preceptor, *viz.*, Gauḍapādācārya was a devotee of Viṣṇu. Gauḍapādācārya pays his homage to his favourite supreme Deity in the first verse of the fourth chapter of his *Māṇḍūkyakārikā* as "*taṁ vande dvipadāṁ varam.*" Śaṅkara in his commentary states: "*ayameva īśvaro yo nārāyaṇākhyaḥ, taṁ vande.*" Rightly does Meppattūr Nārāyaṇa Bhattattiri (2nd half of 16th Cent. and 1st half of 17th Cent. A.D.) the author of the *Nārāyaṇīyam* (popular Kṛṣṇa-Kāvya of Kerala), state that Śaṅkarācārya was a devotee of Viṣṇu: "Revered Śrī Śaṅkarācārya honours that (Viṣṇu) alone among all gods; he is not partial. He has interpreted *Sahasranāma* and other works as devoted to Thee, and in the end he abandoned the mortal remains chanting Thy praise." (*Nārāyaṇīyam*, 90.5)

Here it must be noted that the *Nārāyaṇīyam* is a condensation

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of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and has nothing to do with the life of Śaṅkara. But the author, hailing from Kerala, the birth-province of Śaṅkara, must have been under the impact of the local tradition believing that the Ācārya was a devotee of Viṣṇu. Hence he has mentioned this fact as a noteworthy fact indicating Viṣṇu's paramount supremacy. He has also shown his respect for the Ācārya by calling him '*śrī śaṅkaraḥ*'.

It is also a fact that Śaṅkara helped his mother to attain Viṣṇuloka and enjoy the bliss of salvation. The incident is described in all the Śaṅkara-digvijayas, being the biographies of the Ācārya. This is the English version of the incident as narrated in the *Śaṅkara-digvijaya* of Mādhava Vidyāraṇya:

"During this time, the Ācārya saw through his Yogic insight that the last days of his mother had come. Informing his disciples of this, he travelled through air to his native place where his mother was...The mother who was delighted to see her son in good health, replied: 'It is, indeed, my great good fortune that I could meet you now. What more can I want! I do not desire to continue to live on with this old and decrepit body. You see that I attain to my higher evolution, and then cremate my body according to the rules of the *Śāstras*.' On hearing from his mother what she expected of him, he began to instruct her on the nature of Brahman — eternal, self-effulgent, immeasurable, free from defects, devoid of mutations like birth, old age and death, devoid of all illusory modifications, partless, unitive, of the nature of consciousness-bliss, and all-pervading. The mother then said: "O my son! My mind can find no rest in such an impersonal, abstract, qualityless Being. For my sake, recite the praise of the attractive Divine Person and reveal Him to me." With his heart touched by love and pity, the Ācārya recited an inspired hymn in praise of God Śiva, whereupon there came on the scene the emissaries of Śiva with their paraphernalia of trident and the rest. The mother was frightened to see them. Thereupon the Ācārya recited a hymn in praise of Mahāviṣṇu.... When the son recited the hymn in praise of Mahāviṣṇu, the mother saw the radiant form of Pure Consciousness within, and died with her mind absorbed in Him. The emissaries of Mahāviṣṇu arrived with their divine vehicle of lunar brilliance, and the mother, who was much pleased with them, expressed her thankfulness to the son, and ascended that vehicle with her spiritual body."[29]

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VI

Śaṅkarācārya's *stotras* also highlight his utmost devotion to Viṣṇu, *e.g.*: (i) *vidagdha-gopikāmano..... kṛpā vidhīyatām — Śrī Kṛṣṇāṣṭaka*, 8; (ii) *pṛthivyāṁ tiṣṭhan yo...śaraṇyo lokeśo mama bhavatu kṛṣṇo'kṣiviṣayaḥ — Kṛṣṇāṣṭaka*, 4; (iii) *namo viśvakartre...namo viśvamātre — Śrī Rāma-stotra*, 4; (iv) *avinayam apanaya viṣṇo!... tāraya saṁsārasāgarataḥ — Śrīviṣṇuṣaṭpadī*, 1; and (v) *vijñānanāvam-parigṛhya kaścit...viṣṇoḥ padaṁ yāti sa eva dhanyaḥ — Vijñāna-naukā*, 10.

VII

All these evidences lead us to conclude that Śaṅkara was a great devotee of Viṣṇu who alone was believed by him to be Brahman or the Highest Being. This equation of Viṣṇu with Brahman has been emphatically stated by Madhvācārya: "*brahmaśabdaścā viṣṇā-veva.*"

NOTES

1. A. A. Macdonell, *A Vedic Reader for Students*, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 30.
2. Sri Aurobindo, *On the Veda*, Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, Pondicherry, 1956, p. 394.
3. *History of Dvaita School of Vedānta and its Literature*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1981, p. 78.
4. *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1976, p. 109.
5. *Op. cit.*, p. 8.
6. 'Viṣṇu in the Veda', *Festschrift für Professor P. V. Kane*, Poona, 1941, pp. 95-96.
7. Eng. transl. by Mahuli R. Gopalacharya, *The Heart of the Ṛgveda*, Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd. Bombay, 1971, pp. 77. The translation of the other Ṛgvedic passages is also by the same scholar.
8. "yajño vai viṣṇuḥ" — *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* I, i, 1.
   Cf. 'yajño viṣṇuḥ prajāpatiḥ' — *Maitrī-upaniṣad*, VI.16.
9. "gatiśca sarvabhūtānām-prajānāñcāpi bhārata;
   vyāptau me rodasī pārtha; krāntiśca abhyadhikā mama.
   adhibhūtaniviṣṭaśca tadicchuścāpi bhārata!
   kramaṇāccāpyaham-pārtha! viṣṇurityabhisaṁhitaḥ"
   XII. 32.8. 37-38.
10. The details are covered in the latter part of this article.
11. "devadānava-gandharvā yakṣarākṣasapannagāḥ
    nāsan kṛtayuge sarve sarve devasamāḥ smṛtāḥ.

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sarve hṛṣṭāśca dharmiṣṭhāḥ na tatra krayavikrayau
vedānām-pravibhāgaśca na yuge kṛtasaṁjñake.
brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyā vaiśyāḥ śūdrāḥ svācāratatparāḥ
sadā nārāyaṇaparās-tapodhanaparāyaṇāḥ." I. 41. 7-9.

12. kati kālam-parimitaṁ sthitirme tatra bhārata!
kadā yāsyāmi sarveśa! tad-viṣṇoḥ paramam-padam.

II.10.

13. It is Madhvācārya, the propounder of Dvaita Vedānta who proclaimed "brahmaśabdaśca viṣṇāveva" (the term Brahman denotes and connotes Viṣṇu alone).

14. Yathā cāyamarthaḥ sarveṣāṁ vedāntānāṁ tathā vayam asyāṁ śārīrakamīmāṁsāyām-pradarśayiṣyāmaḥ — end of *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*, *BSB*.I,1.1.

15. "ya imañca lokam-parañca lokaṁ sarvāṇi ca bhūtāni yo'ntaro yamayati" ityupakramya śrūyate — "yaḥ pṛthivyāṁ tiṣṭhan, pṛthivyā antaro yam-pṛthivī na veda, yasya pṛthivī śarīraṁ yaḥ pṛthivīm-antaro yamayatyeṣa ta ātmāntaryāmyamṛtaḥ" (*Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 3.7.12) *ityādi*. *Brahmasūtraśāṅkarabhāṣya*, I.ii.18.

16. "yo'ntaryāmyadhidaivādiṣu śrūyate sa paramātmā eva syāt nānyaḥ" — *Ibid.*

17. English translation by S. K. Belvalkar, *The Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyaṇa with the Comment* of *Śaṅkarācārya*, chapter II, quarters I and II, Bilvakuñja Publishing House, Poona, 1931, p. 5.

18. nanu kāryaprāptau anāvṛtti-śravaṇaṁ na ghaṭate. na hi parasmād-brahmaṇo'nyatra kvacin-nityatāṁ sambhāvayanti. darśayati ca devayānena pathā prasthitānām-anāvṛttim 'etena pratipadyamānā imaṁ mānam-āvartaṁ nāvartante' (*Chāndogya Up.* 4.15.6) iti teṣāmiha na punarāvṛttir-asti "tayordhvam-āyann-amṛtatvam eti' (*Chāndogya Up.*, 8.6.6; *Kaṭha Up.*, 6.16) iti cet; atra brūmaḥ —

"kāryātyaye tadadhyakṣeṇa sahātaḥ param abhidhānāt"

kāryabrahmalokapralayapratyupasthāne sati tatraivot-panna-samyagdarśanāḥ santaḥ.....viṣṇoḥ paramam-padam prati-padyanta iti. ..." —*Brahmasūtra-śāṅkara-bhāṣya*, IV, iii, 10.

19. "brahmaṇā saha te sarve samprāpte pratisañcare; parasyānte kṛtātmānaḥ praviśanti param-padam."

20. (i) "tad-idaṁ gītāśāstram, tasyāsya gītāśāstrasya, viśiṣṭa-prayojana-sambandhābhidheyavad-gītāśāstram" Introduction.

(ii) tāsmād gītāśāstre — II. 10.

(iii) eṣo gītāśāstrārtha upasaṁhṛtaḥ -XVIII.17.

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(iv) asmin gītāśāstre... iteyeṣo gītāśāstrārthokta-kartavyārthasya vibhāgaḥ — XVIII. 66.

21. "ubhau tau na vijānītaḥ" iti pūrveṇa mantreṇa asya sambandhaḥ. "ya enaṁ vetti hantāraṁ" ityanena mantreṇa ... II. 20.

22. (i) tad-idaṁ gītāśāstraṁ samasta-vedārthasārasaṅgrahabhūtaṁ ...

(ii) tasyāsya gītāśāstrasya saṅkṣepataḥ prayojanamparaṁ niśreyasaṁ sahetukasya saṁsārasya atyantoparamalakṣaṇam ...

(iii) imaṁ dviprakāraṁ dharmaṁ..... vāsudevākhyamparam-brahma.....atastadvivaraṇe yatnaḥ kriyate mayā — Introduction.

(iv) tayośca sarvakarmasannyāsapūrvakāt ātmajñānānnānyato nivṛttiriti... bhagavān vāsudevaḥ — 'aśocyān' ityādi — II. 10.

(v) etāvān sarvo hi vedārthaḥ gītārthaśca upasaṁhṛtya uktaḥ — XIII. 18.

(vi) yadyapi gītākhyaṁ samastaṁ śāstramucyate ... ... sarvaśca vedārtha iha parisamāptaḥ — XV. 20.

(vii) sarvasyaiva gītāśāstrasya ... ... ayamadhyāya ārabhyate — XVIII. 1.

(viii) eṣa gītāśāstrārtha upasaṁhṛtaḥ. sa eṣaḥ sarvavedārthasāro nipuṇamatibhiḥ 'paṇḍitair-vicārya pratipattavyaḥ' — XVIII. 17.

23. The printed text reads the second line as: 'jñāna-vairāgyayoścaiva ṣaṇṇām-bhaga itīraṇā.'

24. 'yajño vai viṣṇuḥ' iti śruter-yajña īśvaras-tadarthaṁ yat-kriyate tad-yajñārthaṁ karma.' III. 9.

"adhiyajñaḥ sarvajñābhimāninī viṣṇvākhyā devatā, 'yajño vai viṣṇuḥ' iti śruteḥ." — VIII. 4.

25. (i) "mayi vāsudeve parameśvare sarvajñe saravātmani ..." — III. 30.

(ii) "yo mām-paśyati vāsudevaṁ sarvasyātmānaṁ sarvatra sarveṣu bhūteṣu..." — VI. 30.

(iii) "daivī devasya mama īśvarasya viṣṇoḥ"... VII. 14.

(iv) "na mām-parameśvaraṁ nārāyaṇaṁ" — VII. 15.

(v) "jñānī viṣṇoḥ tattvavicca..." — VII. 16.

(vi) antakāle maraṇakāle ca māmeva parameśvaraṁ viṣṇuṁ smaran.—VIII. 5.

(vii) taddhāma sthānam, paramaṁ prakṛṣṭam, mama

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viṣṇoḥ paramam-padam-ityarthaḥ, VIII. 21.

(viii) paraṁ devaṁ nārāyaṇam ... IX. 22.

26. (i) prakṛtiṁ svāṁ mama vaiṣṇavīṁ māyāṁ ... IV. 6.

(ii) katham-punardaivīm-etāṁ triguṇātmikāṁ vaiṣṇavīṁ māyām-atikrānti. — VII. 14.

(iii) yānti madyājino madyajanaśīlā vaiṣṇavā māmeva yānti.—IX. 25.

27. (i) yā vāsudeve'anīśvarāsarvajñāśaṅkā mūrkhāṇāṁ tām-pariharan śrībhagavānuvāca... — IV. 5.

(i) janma māyārūpaṁ karma ca ..... punarutpattiṁ naiti na prāpnoti.— IV. 9.

(iii) ya evaṁ sarvātmānaṁ māṁ nārāyaṇam pratipadyate sa mahātmā na tatsamo'nyo'sti, adhiko vā.— VII. 19.

(iv) "sarvairapi karaṇair-vāsudevādanyan-nopalabhyate yayā sā ananyā bhaktiḥ" — XI 54

(v) "yasmād dharmyāmṛtam-idam yathoktam-anutiṣṭhan bhagavato viṣṇoḥ parameśvarasya atīva priyo bhavati, tasmādidam dharmyāmṛtaṁ mumukṣuṇā yatnato'nuṣṭheyaṁ viṣṇoḥ priyaṁ paraṁ dhāma jigamiṣuṇā iti vākyārthaḥ" — XII.20.

(vi) "mām-pradviṣantaḥ, macchāsanātivartitvam-pradveṣaḥ ..." — XVI.18.

(vii) "māṁ caivaṁ tatkarmabuddhisākṣibhūtam antaḥ śarīrasthaṁ nārāyaṇaṁ karśayantaḥ, mad-anuśāsanākaraṇam-eva matkarśanam"— XVII. 6.

(viii) "na ca yo māṁ vāsudevaṁ prākṛtaṁ manuṣyaṁ matvā abhyasūyati, ātmapraśaṁsādidoṣādhyāropaṇena īśvaratvaṁ mama ajānan na sahate." — XVII.67.

28. Read: "Viṣṇusahasranāmastotrabhāṣyam-pada-śailyādi-pariśīlanena-śrīśaṅkarabhagavatpādācāryairna kṛtamiti, kecinmanyante. śrīśaṅkārācāryair-bālya eva kṛtamidam-bhāṣyam-iti keṣāñcid-abhiprāyaḥ. prāyaśaḥ padārtha-vivaraṇādau gītābhāṣyaśailyā śrīśaṅkarabhagavatpādācāryakṛtam-evedam-ityabhiyuktajanāśayaḥ. keralaprāntīye meppattūra-nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭatiri-praṇīte guruvātālayeśa(guruvāyūra-śrī kṛṣṇa)stotrātmake nārāyaṇīyagranthe, "śrī-śaṅkaro'pi bhagavān sakaleṣu tāvat

tvāmeva mānayati yo na hi pakṣapātī.
tvanniṣṭham-eva sa hi nāmasahasrakādi-
vyākhyad-bhavastuti paraśca gatiṁ gato'sau."

(*Nārāyaṇīyam*, 10.90.5) ityasmin padye śrīśaṅkara-bhagavatpādācāryasyaiva viṣṇusahasranāmabhāṣya kartṛtvaṁ vyaktam-pratyapādi ... etad bhāṣyavivṛtau api

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"bhāṣyaṁ tairupadiṣṭārtham-bhagavatpādanirmitam;
viṣṇornāmasahasrasya ..."

iti śrīśaṅkarabhagavatpādācāryāṇām eva viṣṇusahasranāmastotrakartṛtvaṁ vyaktam-pratyapādi." — *Śrīviṣṇusahasranāmastotram* with Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary and the *vivṛti* commentary of Tāraka Brahmānandīya Sarasvatī, (ed.) R. Rāmaśāstrī, Oriental Research Institute, University of Mysore, Mysore, 1961, Introduction, p. xvii.

29. Mādhava-Vidyāraṇya, *Śaṅkara-digvijaya*, (tr.) Swami Tapasyānanda, Śrī Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1986, pp. 153-54.

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28

THE THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

G. SUNDARA RAMAIAH

The philosophical investigations pursued during the last several years by many eminent interpreters of Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara particularly concerning the nature and status of God, generally speaking, give us two different kinds of results. (i) A high degree of admiration for Śaṅkara's philosophy which made them say that he is "supreme as a philosopher and dialectician and great as a man of calm judgement and wide toleration." (ii) Others are of the opinion that Śaṅkara's philosophy, though admirable in many respects, nonetheless has lacunae from the religious (theological) and ethical points of view which cause certain damage to the fulfledgedness of the system.

Being a Vedāntin, Śaṅkara is not a purely rational philosopher but a *śrutivādin* (scripturalist) whose absolute reliance is on the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahma-sūtras* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, but who at the same time can also use all the resources and power of 'rational dialectics' in the service of their teaching. Then the question arises: how far is this indictment of Śaṅkara that there is no place for God in his system really justified? In what follows, I shall endeavour to answer this question in the light of my understanding of Śaṅkara's writings and also explain the theological position of Śaṅkara.

I

Before we proceed to examine the fundamental theistic assumptions of Śaṅkara, let us ask the question: what are the ideas which have lent countenance to the view that Śaṅkara's philosophy, particularly his conception of God, is unsatisfactory from the religious and ethical points of view? We may give a brief summary of these ideas. 1. Śaṅkara draws a distinction between God and Absolute, the Saguṇa Brahman and Nirguṇa Brahman, the former having only a phenomenal and lower order of reality

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than the latter and also negatable in the higher experience of the latter. 2. Nirguṇa Brahman, the highest reality of Śaṅkara's conception, is a blank, featureless, abstract, and impersonal entity which, from the very nature of the case, is unable to become the object of religious worship.[1] 3. Śaṅkara's emphasis on *jñāna* and his rejection of *jñāna-karma-samuccayavāda*, is considered as a factor cutting across the very roots of religious life and making it of no value or significance.

Let us now discuss what measure of truth there is in these objections against Śaṅkara's philosophy. In order to understand correctly Śaṅkara's conception of God, we should first be clear about his conception of Brahman, particularly his conception of Brahman as having a two-fold nature, *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa*. Śaṅkara makes his position perfectly clear in the following passage:

> Brahman is apprehended under two forms; in the first place, as qualified by limiting conditions owing to the multiformity of the evolution of name and form; and in the second place as being the opposite of this; *i.e.*, free from all limiting conditions whatever.[2]

On account of the uniformity of the Vedānta texts[3] which declare Brahman to possess a double nature, according as it is the object either of knowledge or of nescience, we must preclude all other causes. Continues Śaṅkara:

> Although the same Ātman dwells in the hearts of all things, movable and immovable, yet there is in different things a graded revelation of the glory and power of this immutable eternal *Ātman* in accordance with the graded levels of consciousness which constitute the different limiting adjuncts in the different beings.[4]

The point that is to be emphasized here is that Śaṅkara's conception of Brahman as conditioned by *avidyā* or Saguṇa Brahman, is not a different entity numerically. But it is the very same Brahman conceived in association with *avidyā*, and it has all those attributes which the religious devotee or the personalistic theist demands in the God of his devotion. There is no reason why the Nirguṇa aspect of Brahman should be singled out and taken into consideration in the context of our discussion of the problems touching religious and ethical life, in the light of Śaṅkara's explicit statement, already quoted above, "Brahman has a two-fold nature."

Śaṅkara's definition of God makes it clear that, according to

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him, God is not an entity numerically different from the Absolute but is, in essence, identical with the Absolute. "Thus Brahman conditioned by the name and form — limiting adjuncts born of *avidyā* — becomes God, like the all-pervading universal space limited by jar, etc."[5] Just as the space enclosed in a jar is numerically non-different from the all-pervading universal space, so also Brahman within the limitations of Godhead is numerically non-different from Brahman conceived as free from all limitations. Śaṅkara puts it thus:

> We therefore must adopt the following view. In the same way as those parts of ethereal space which are limited by jars and water pots are not really different from the universal ethereal space, and as the water of a mirage is not really different from the surface of the salty steppe — for the nature of that water is that it is seen in one moment and has vanished in the next, and moreover, it is not to be perceived by its own nature (*i.e.*, apart from the surface of the desert)...[6]

When Śaṅkara defines God as Brahman limited or conditioned by *māyā*, it should be remembered that this limitation or conditioning is not on Brahman *ab extra* by some principle or power other than Brahman, but is the self-limiting or self-conditioning by Brahman by its own power of *māyā*. Saguṇa Brahman is not a separate entity different from Nirguṇa Brahman, and is not therefore higher or lower than the latter, but the conditioned aspect of the 'self-same Brahman'. Reality with its differentiation into God, world and individual souls, is a necessary self-expression or self-revelation of Brahman in names and forms. These manifestations of Brahman are by necessity inherent in the very nature of Brahman and this is often unnoticed by the critics. In this context it is interesting to note the observations made by Paul Deussen. He says:

> Śaṅkara did not carefully distinguish Brahman, the undifferentiated, from the phenomenal world on the one hand, and Īśvara on the other. This undifferentiated has two contraries: first the form of the phenomenal world, as Brahman, conditioned by *upādhis*, appears; then the imperfect figurative ideas, which we form of the Godhead, in order to bring it nearer to our understanding and our worship. It is strange that between these two contraries of the undifferentiated Brahman, however wide

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> apart they naturally are, Śaṅkara draws no sharp distinction, and even if, according to one passage, it seems as if he saw in the phenomenal forms the basis (*ālambanam*) of the presentation forms, yet from the continual intermingling of the two ... it follows that our author never became clearly conscious of the difference between them.[7]

But, according to Śaṅkara the manifestation as the name and form of world is a necessity inherent in Brahman. "Were name and form not manifested," says Śaṅkara, "the unconditioned form of this self called the pure unity of knowledge would not be known. It is when there is a name-form manifestation as body and organ that it becomes possible to its nature."[8]

The unconditioned and the conditioned are complementary to each other. The complementary nature, according to Śaṅkara is to be understood in the following manner:

> For as in the series of beings which descends from man to blades of grass a successive diminution of knowledge, power and so on, is observed — although they have all the common attribute of being animated — so in the ascending series extending from man upto Hiraṇyagarbha, a gradually increasing manifestation of knowledge, power, and so on, takes place, a circumstance which *śruti* and *smṛti* mention in many places, and which it is impossible to deny.[9]

In this hierarchical manifestation of Brahman, God is the highest reality. Each existent in the manifested universe has its rank of reality in the graded hierarchy determined by the quality of its limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*); and "God is endowed with super-eminent *upādhi* by virtue of which he becomes the Lord and Ruler of the individual souls endowed with *upādhis* of a lower kind."[10]

It is necessary to make it clear in this connection that the fact that God is limited by the limiting adjuncts does not place God on a par with the finite souls, which are also limited by *upādhis*. The *upādhi* of God is of the highest kind in virtue of which he ranks highest in the manifested universe. The difference between God and the finite souls is expressed thus by Śaṅkara:

> The finite soul, under the influence of *avidyā*, identifies itself, as it were with the body, etc., appropriates to itself the miseries to which the body is subject and suffers those miseries; not so does God identify himself with the body, etc., and experience himself as a sufferer.[11]

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God, according to Śaṅkara, is phenomenally true — and so is all reality that we finite beings, under the subjection of *avidyā* experience — but not on a par with other phenomenal existents He is the source, sustainer, and ground of the entire realm of phenomena and has a central position therein. In the phenomenal (*vyāvahārika*) state of experience, God and devotional life are as real and meaningful for Śaṅkara as for anybody. Were it not so, he would not have composed all those beautiful hymns[12] and prayers which have become the cherished treasure of the cultural heritage of India. One should not commit the mistake — so easy to commit — of applying Śaṅkara's statements pertaining to the *pāramārthika* experience to the *vyāvahārika* experience, and complain that his philosophy does not meet the demands of everyday life.

Furthermore, that God according to Śaṅkara is non-different from Brahman is also a necessary corollary from his doctrine that Brahman is both the operative cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) and the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) of the universe. This view has been clearly set forth by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*.[13] Brahman is not an *ab extra* creator of the universe, either *exnihilo* or out of a material other than itself. The universe is a graded or hierarchical self-revelation of the power and glory of Brahman, so that Brahman is the very stuff of this material universe. This is what is meant by saying that Brahman is the material cause of the universe. In the universe, which is the self-revelation of Brahman, God is its highest self-revelation. Brahman is also the operative cause, since there is nothing else to be the operative cause. Śaṅkara's doctrine that Brahman is both the operative and the material cause of the universe should allay the suspicion that Brahman is lacking initiative or influence. In fact, Śaṅkara has made the Sāṅkhya conception of Puruṣa the target of his attack precisely on the ground that it altogether lacks initiative, leaving the unconscious Pradhāna to evolve itself. Moving power has not been denied to Brahman in association with *māyā*. A considerable misunderstanding of the Advaita position would be removed if Brahman were thought of, not as an entity resembling a block of stone utterly lacking in power or initiative, but as endowed with the power of *māyā*. Śaṅkara speaks of *māyā* as the inscrutable power of the omniscient Lord. In the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Śaṅkara says: "The beginningless *avidyā* made up of three *guṇas*, beyond the effects (as their cause), and called by the name of *avyakta* (the undifferentiated), is the power of the Highest

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Lord."[14]

It has been remarked by S. Radhakrishnan: "The Absolute of Śaṅkara, rigid, motionless, and totally lacking in initiative or influence cannot call forth our worship"[15] And again, "As an interpreter of the Upanishads, Śaṅkara was obliged to offer a reconciliation between the negative[16] and the positive descriptions of Brahman and it is meant to convey our ideas to others or serve the purposes of worship."[17]

In this context it is interesting to note the observations made by Rudolf Otto on 'Negative Theology'. He says:

> This negative theology does not mean that faith and feeling are dissipated and reduced to nothing; on the contrary, it contains within it the loftiest spirit of devotion, and it is out of such negative attributes that Chrysostom fashions the most solemn confessions and prayers ... A conception negative in form may often become the symbol for a content of meaning which, if absolutely unutterable, is nonetheless in the highest degree positive... A negative theology can and indeed must arise... from purely and genuinely religious roots, the experience of the luminous.[18]

We submit that Radhakrishnan's remarks are out of place when applied to that aspect of Brahman in which Brahman is the object of devotion for a devotee, *viz.*, the *saguṇa* conditioned aspect of Brahman, Brahman as God. One's attention should be drawn here to Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma Sūtras*[19] and his first verse on the *Gītā-bhāṣya*.[20] Here Śaṅkara says that the Highest Lord, far from "lacking in initiative or influence," brings by his command the individual souls into *saṁsāra* and by his grace grants them *mokṣa* therefrom. In Śaṅkara's *ipsissima verba*:

> For the soul which in the state of nescience is blinded by the darkness of ignorance and hence unable to distinguish itself from the complex of effects and instruments, the samsara-state in which it appears as agent and enjoyer is brought about through the *permission* of Lord who is the highest Self, the superintendent of all actions, the witness residing in all beings, the cause of all intelligence; and we must therefore assume that final release also is expected through knowledge caused by the grace of the God.[21]

And again, if one reads Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Gītā*, parti-

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cularly the invocatory stanza, it would never occur, at least at the outset, to anyone that here, a non-dualist or an Advaitin, is speaking and that the Nirguṇa Brahman, or absorption into the Nirguṇa Brahman, is being proclaimed as salvation. It reads as follows:

Nārāyaṇa is beyond *avyakta*;
From the *avyakta* the mundane egg is born;
Within the mundane egg, verily, are these worlds
And the earth made up of the seven dvīpas.

There is no hesitation whatsoever in the mind of Śaṅkara when he adopts this verse as a preface to his commentary on the *Gītā* and then describes Nārāyaṇa and bows down to him and says how Īśvara, the Lord, creates this world. But if it is argued that what has been said in the preface is nothing but an adaptation, a passing allegory or a compromise with lower knowledge, it would be an inaccurate statement of the position of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara's point of view is no longer simply that of the old monistic *Upaniṣads*. Long before Śaṅkara, India had developed a distincity theistic philosophy. The *Gītā*, the Epics, the *Purāṇas* had been its heralds and witnesses; and Śaṅkara's philosophy enters into the heritage. Nirguṇa Brahman goes beyond the personal God and yet still bears the fragrance and colour of the ground from which it springs.

Śaṅkara maintains that there are two kinds of *vidyā*. The distinction between *aparā vidyā* and *parā vidyā*, which he is keen to maintain, makes him a passionate theist; and to deny this is to ignore the real position. There are six kinds of modifications called *bhāvavikāras*. They are: (1) origination, (2) existence, (3) alteration, (4) increase, (5) decrease, (6) destruction. Since all these are included, broadly speaking, in the origination, only origin, subsistence and dissolution are mentioned in the *taṭasthalakṣaṇa* of Brahman given in the *Vedānta-sūtras*. The active principle of manifestation is called Saguṇa Brahman or Īśvara. As Īśvara he is the vast refuge of all, and adorable beneficent Lord.[22] He is in the hearts of all creatures as ruler.[23] He is the controller, ruler and Lord of all.[24] He is the bridge which sustains and prevents the separation of all these spheres. He is again called the immutable or *akṣara*. He is also called indweller or *antaryāmin*. All these statements are simply the commonly used definitions of a strictly theistic conception of God.

Against the attacks of his opponents, particularly, the Sāṅ-

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khyas, Śaṅkara develops what is for him a proof of God's existence. Śaṅkara argues that a material thing *viz. pradhāna* could not of itself pass from the primary condition of equilibrium (*sāmya-avasthā*) into a creative activity, *i.e.* into one which is moving toward a definite purpose or goal. Argues Śaṅkara: "This movement, namely toward a goal is impossible with a non-spiritual cause. For instance, clay or wagon, because they are non-spiritual, cannot of themselves move towards a definite end, unless they are directed by potters or by horses."[25] Similarly in his commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* he locates the proof of God in the laws of the universe, *e.g.* in the regularity of the monsoons. He remarks: "The wind fulfills its function ... But such regularity presupposes a guide."[26]

Again, Śaṅkara puts forward something clearly analogous to the cosmological proof for the existence of God, which asserts that the chain of evolution cannot stretch endlessly backward, but leads to a primary cause, which has no need of an origin and which supports the whole chain of creation. In support of this he says that if there were no primary nature as the ultimate root, the result would be *regressus in infinitum*.[27]

The lower Brahman or Īśvara is above gods and devas who are his creatures and who help him in the formation and creation of the world. He is at the same time the Saviour-God (*jagad-rakṣaka*). He gives the *Vedas*. The redeeming knowledge of salvation comes through his grace (*prasāda*). The pious people reach him after death to attain the divine glory, with the sole exception of the control over the world. The entire *bhakti-mārga*, *i.e.*, the personal reverence and worship of God, prayers and praises of God, and the private devotion of the individual and the love of God are also found in the sub-structures of the edifice of Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

In order to show that Nirguṇa Brahman or the Highest Lord is not the exclusive opposite of Saguṇa Brahman, but it is a superlative form of the lower Brahman, Śaṅkara posits an intimate and fundamental relationship between the two. God or Īśvara is expressed in two forms. (1) In the first place, God is conceived as a collection of the most noble qualities (*kalyāṇa-guṇas*) and this is Saguṇa Brahman. The purpose of this expression is to set up the highest ideal. This Saguṇa Brahman is also intended for meditative purpose and is intended for persons of lower intellectual comprehensive power.[28] (2) The second method of finding ex-

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pressions for God (the highest ideal) is through negation. God is defined by negative terms and the purpose of these expressions is exclusion or *vyāvṛtti*. This, however, is not meant to indicate impoverishment or emptiness, but the exclusion of all definitions as limitations. This negative approach is not opposed to the positive expression of God, but a continuation of it which leads to the highest positive expression. In other words, Śaṅkara's view *nirguṇatvam* is the superlative form of the *saguṇatvam*. Therefore, Śaṅkara reserves the right for him to pass from the standpoint of *parā vidyā* to that of *aparā vidyā* and vice-versa. The significance of this process is simply to ascribe to the highest Brahman all the conceivable divine values of theism. All these theistic assertions about Saguṇa Brahman have a positive interest for Śaṅkara. Therefore, when he ascribes to Brahman certain qualities, which strictly speaking belong only to personal God, it is not a question of concession or accommodation, but is the very essence of his theistic position. This is particularly true in his exposition of the *Gītā*.[29]

In conclusion, we may say that Śaṅkara has poured within the growing current of *Īśvaravāda* not only the precious teachings of the theistic *Upaniṣads*, like *Īśā* and *Śvetāśvatara*, but also much of the teachings of the *Gītā*. For him the world does not simply need an omniscient ordainer to rearrange it after its periodic destructions but an absolute total cause of its very being, not a mere *nimitta-kāraṇa* combining pre-existing materials but one who is also the self-existent *upādāna* which provides all the materials and the whole substance of the world.

NOTES

1. S. Radhakrishnan puts the matter in his inimitable and felicitous style: "The world is said to be an appearance and God a bloodless Absolute dark with the excess of light." — *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 652. And again, "The Nirguṇa Brahman which stares at us with frozen eyes regardless of our selfless devotion and silent suffering, is not the God of the religious insight." *Ibid.*, p. 683.

2. *The Vedānta-sūtras* (with the commentary by Śaṅkarācārya), G. Thibaut (tr.), p. 61 (I. i. 11).

3. The following are some of the Vedānta passages which Śaṅkara gives in the *Sūtra-bhāṣya* in support of his doctrine.

4. *The Vedānta-sūtras* (I.i.11), *op. cit.*, p. 62.

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5. *Ibid.*, p. 321 (II.i.14).

6. *Ibid.*

7. Paul Deussen, *System of the Vedanta*, pp. 205-206.

8. *The Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* (with the commentary of Śaṅkarācārya), Swami Madhavananda (tr.), p. 403, (II.v.19).

9. *The Vedánta-sūtras, op. cit.*, p. 213 (I.iii.30).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 65 (II.iii.45).

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66 (II.iii.46).

12. *Saundaryalaharī, Śivānandalaharī, Annapūrṇāṣṭakam, Mīnākṣī-aṣṭakam, Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotram, Daśaślokī.*

13. *Brahma-sūtras*, I.iv.23.

14. *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 108.

15. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 659.

16. See Śaṅkara's commentary on *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII. 1.1.

17. On the nature of 'negative theology', *cf.* Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of Holy*, p. 189.

18. *Brahma-sūtras*, Śaṅkara's commentary, II.iii.41.

19. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Gītā* (Invocatory verse).

20. *The Vedānta-sūtras, op. cit.*, p. 59.

21. Prof. Richard Garbe says that in its pure form the *Gītā* is one of the original texts of Bhakti, Piety with its distinctly theistic stamp. But scholars like R. C. Zaehner and others observe that Śaṅkara forces the texts when he attempts to read into it his own teachings of the transcendental Brahman. *Cf.* R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticisms*, p. 56.

22. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, III. 17: "*sarvasya śaraṇaṁ bṛhat*".

23. *Ibid.*, III. 13.

24. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, VI. 2.

25. *Vedānta-sūtras*, II.ii.1.

26. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (Brahmavallī) III.

27. *Vedānta-sūtras*,II. iii.8.

28. *Cf.* Śaṅkara's Introduction to *Chāndogya-* and *Taittirīya Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas*. And also the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, op. cit.*, p. 318 (II. i. 20).

29. *Cf.* Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Gītā* VII, 13; VII, 19; X. 4; XI. 55.

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29

INTERPRETATION OF PĀÑCARĀTRĀDHIKARAṆA OF BRAHMASŪTRA BY ŚAṄKARA VIS-A-VIS TEMPLE-ORIENTED RELIGION OF THE ĀGAMAS

PRABHAKAR APTE

A section in the *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa, by name "Utpattya-sambhavādhikaraṇa," popularly known as "Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa" (*B.S.* II.2. 42-45) deals with the topic of non-tenability of the origination of the individual soul (*jīva*) from the supreme Self (*paramātman*). This section has been interpreted by various Ācāryas in various ways in accordance with the philosophical tenets of their respective schools. It is generally regarded that Śaṅkara has refuted the alleged stand taken by the Pāñcarātra school of thougt that the individual soul takes birth from the highest Self. Rāmānuja, the propounder of Viśiṣṭādvaita school, has interpreted the same section as upholding the stand of the theistic schools. The Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa has apparently a third dimension of socio-religious significance. The Saṁhitā texts of the *Pāñcarātrāgama* do not seem to subscribe to the viewpoint of the origination or birth of the individual soul ascribed to it, in the commentary of Śaṅkara on the *Brahmasūtras*.[1] Secondly, Śaṅkara appears to use a softer tenor of criticism while attacking the socio-religious teachings of the Pāñcarātra school such as *pañcakāla-prakriyā*, the ideal diary for the followers of religious path with fivefold division of a day.[2] While Rāmānuja has relied on the *Pāñcarātra-saṁhitās* as on a par with the *śruti*, the Vedic scriptures, for his philosophical proposition supporting his mission of religious reform through the propagation of the religion of image-worship, the progressive school of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta is also said to be directly or indirectly responsible for the growth of the theistic Paurāṇic religion of federal character popularly known as *pañcāyatana-pūjā*, worship of five deities in a single temple complex.[3]

Thus, in the context of the Āgamic temple-religion, the Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa of the *Brahmasūtras*, in itself, and the religio-

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philosophical musings of the Ācāryas taking divergent stands in interpreting the same, have richly contributed to the historical growth of the popular aspect of the theistic schools. Historically, it is evident that the centuries which witnesssed the philosophical debates of the Ācāryas, by way of *pūrva-pakṣa* and *siddhānta-pakṣa* have also witnessed the enormous growth of the cultural life in India revolving round the image-worship pertaining to the adorable deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇapati and others. I propose to bring out the philosophical import of the Pāñcarātra-section of the *Brahma-sūtras*, its interpretation as presented by Śaṅkara vis-a-vis interpretations adduced by Ācāryas like Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha and others as well as the philosophical tenets of the *Āgamas* in the context of the temple-oriented religion propounded and propagated by the Āgamic seers.

The section under discussion, "*utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa*" popularly known as "Pāñcarātra-adhikaraṇa" is also a *catuḥsūtrī* containing four *sūtras viz. utpattyasambhavāt, na ca kartuḥ karaṇam, vijñānādibhāve vā tad asamañjasam* and *vipratiṣedhācca*.[4] The identification of the target-school of thought as Pāñcarātra-doctrine of *caturvyūha*, the fourfold aspect of the supreme Self, has perhaps been made by the great Śaṅkara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtras*. His words are "*tatra bhāgavatā manyante*" meaning the Bhāgavatas, *i.e.* the Pāñcarātrins so think. He, thereafter, explains their viewpoint as *prima facie* view and proceeds to prove its untenability. He opens the discussion with a query as to why that view needs to be refuted since *Īśvara*, the Lord is already ascertained in the *Vedas* to be the substratum as well as presiding entity. He further propounds that the Bhāgavata or *Pāñcarātra* doctrine contains some portions which are irrational and illogical, hence not tenable and not acceptable.[5] The two *sūtras* 42-43 of that section, according to Śaṅkara, dismiss the possibility of birth being ascribed to the individual soul and the possibility of emanation of an instrument from an agent, *i.e.* the emanation of the mind from the individual soul. These two statements which are irrational are found according to Śaṅkara,[6] in some of the authoritative texts of the *Pāñcarātrāgama*. While the later commentators in Śaṅkara's school of Vedānta subscribe to the view that the Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa of the *Brahmasūtras* is meant for partial refutation of the Pāñcarātra-Bhāgavata tenets, the commentators belonging to the non-Śāṅkara Vedānta school generally hold that the four *śūtras* are to be divided into *prima facie* view, *i.e. pūrva-*

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pakṣa (42-43) and approved view, *i.e. siddhānta-pakṣa* (44-45).[7] According to them, the origination or emanation of the individual soul from the supreme self or the emanation of mind from the individual soul is nowhere upheld in the Pāñcarātra tenets. Hence that view is to be treated as a notional *prima facie* case to be rejected at the final stage.[8] Both the sets of commentaries belonging to Śaṅkara and non-Śaṅkara schools of Vedānta are in agreement on two points: that the supreme Self in the form of Lord of the universe is capable of self-multiplication since there is ample evidence in the Vedic texts to attest that view; secondly, an individual soul aspiring for emancipation, being advised to resort to the path of devotional worship by the Pāñcarātra seers has also quite strong support in the *śruti*.[9]

As for the identification of Sankarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha with *jīva*, *buddhi* and *ahaṅkāra*, a clear statement is found in the *Lakṣmītantra*, a late text (c. 1000 A.D.) of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*.[10] The identification of Sankarṣaṇa and Pradyumna to individual soul and mind respectively is to be found in the Pāñcarātra account described in the *mokṣaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.[11] A clear statement to support the alleged viewpoint of origination of *jīva* is, however, not to be found in the present lot of extant *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitā*; this has been ascertained by Rāmānuja in *Śrībhāṣya*.[12] The language of the *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās* is, however, of the nature of musings of the seers and thinkers of theistic religious bias; it cannot be and should not be put to sharp weapons of logic wielded by the Ācāryas belonging to various schools of philosophy neatly fashioned on the lines of *pūrva-* and *siddhānta-pakṣa*. Occasionally, the philosophical musings of the Pāñcarātra seers are expressed in such a susceptible language that some passages serve as logical traps for opponents. For instance, *Pādma Sāṁhitā* (c. 800 A.D.) of *Pāñcarātrāgama*, describes the state of the liberated soul as, 'it becomes myself; there is no distinction whatsoever.' This obviously sounds a purely *advaitic* tone; but the latter part of the verse runs as follows: 'as I (Lord) move about here (*i.e.* in *Vaikuṇṭha*) so do the liberated souls move about,[13] instantly erasing the force of the earlier statement. The point to be noted, in such a context, is that while assessing the over-all standpoint of any school of thought, the scattered references are to be brought in one place to grasp a cumulative picture. The philosophical tenets of the Pāñcarātra, as presented in the *Saṁhitās*, in a rather loose fashion, when cumulatively viewed

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in proper perspective, leave no scope for the entertainment of the idea that an individual soul is to take birth from the highest Self or to take birth at all. The problem of explaining the multiplicity of the universe emanating from the unity of the ultimate Truth or the problem of explaining the multiplication or the diversification of the one ultimate Truth is the age-old problem facing the philosophers from ancient times. The schools of philosophy have their own assumptions and logical solutions shaping their respective schools of philosophy — Advaita, Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaitādvaita and Śuddhādvaita, etc. Each school is labelled with the key-solution it offers for the ultimate unity-multiplicity-problem. The concept of *māyā* with the three-fold levels of reality in Śaṅkara's philosophy and the *śarīra-śarīrī-bhāva* in Rāmānuja's philosophy are well-known examples of this fact. The doctrine of *vyūhas* is inseparably associated with the Pāñcarātra school of thought. One cannot think of the *vyūha* doctrine without Pāñcarātra and Pāñcarātra without the *vyūha* doctrine,[14] and this doctrine is an innovation for the explanation of the multiplicity in the form of visible universe emanating from the unity of the ultimate Truth. The doctrine of *vyūha* has been initially explained in the *mokṣaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* with evolutionary stages: *eka-vyūha*, *dvi-vyūha*, *tri-vyūha* and *catur-vyūha*,[15] indicating the need of philosophical solution to the unity-multiplicity problem faced by the seers of Pāñcarātra.[16]

The philosophical basis for theistic cult popularly known as *Āgamas* or the temple-oriented scriptural texts developed into a separate section called *jñānapāda*. The philosophical nucleus grew into an expansive socio-religious manifestation in the form of temples and temple-complexes. This gave a third dimension to the *Āgamas* in the form of two sections *kriyāpāda* and *caryāpāda*[17] respectively dealing with the aspects of constructional and ritual activity of the enshrined image-worship. The meditative side of the ritual of worship was taken care of by the section of *Āgamas* called *yogapāda*. The partial approval of the theoretical basis of the theistic tenets as well as the practical basis in the form of meditational worship of God received in the Pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa commented on by Śaṅkara came as a boon in disguise for the flourishing development of temple-building actvity in India. While the followers of the Śāṅkara school of thought adopted, by the Paurāṇic formula of image-worship named *pañcāyatana-pūjā*,[18] accommodating five deities, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇapati, Sūrya, and

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Devi in one temple-complex, the purely Vaiṣṇavite schools represented by teachers like Rāmānuja vehemently propagated the temple-building activity to confine to the worship of Viṣṇu and his aspects. The socio-religious swing tilted towards the ritual of image-worship from the ritual of Vedic sacrifices and subsequent ritual propagated by Buddhist monasticism, during some centuries before and after the time of Śaṅkara. In the present times, the manifestation of the perennial temple-oriented Āgamic religion is to be found in the form of monumental temples, especially in South India, bustling with socio-religious activity round the clock and round the year. It may be safely said that the discussion arising out of the partial criticism of the section *Brahmasūtra* named Pāñcarātra and subsequent arousal of a team of Ācāryas, Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Madhva and others advocating the cause of Pāñcarātra philosophy and religion resulted in further popularising the theistic teaching of the *Āgamas*.

In fine, it may be said that the Utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa and its commentaries piloted by Śaṅkara have richly contributed to the socio-religious life of India.

NOTES

1. *Śrībhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra*, II, ii, 42:
   "evaṁ sarvāsvapi jīvasya nityatvavacanāt jīvasvarūpotpattiḥ pāñcarātrāgame pratiṣiddhaiva."
2. *Brahmasūtra-Śāṅkarabhāṣya*, II.2.42-45; *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 22.64ff.
3. "madhye devīṁ sthāpayitvā pañcāyatanadevatāḥ,
   caturdikṣu sthāpayet..." —
   Śivapurāṇa v.51.27; *Varāhapurāṇa*, 170.24.
4. *Brahma-sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa, II.2.42-45; at some places like *Śrībhāṣya*, the *sūtra* no. varies.
5. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*, II.ii.42.
6. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*, II.ii.42.
7. *Śrībhāṣya*, *Śrutaprakāśikā*, *Anuvyākhyāna*, *Nyāyasudhā* on *Brahmasūtra*, II.ii.42ff.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 22.64; *Brahmasūtra-Śāṅkarabhāṣya*, II.ii.42..
10. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, Adyar 1959, 6.12-13.
11. *Mahābhārata*, xii, 354. 13-20.
12. *Śrībhāṣya*, II. ii. 42:

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"evaṁ sarvāsvapi saṁhitāsu jīvasvarūpotpattiḥ pratiṣiddhaiva."

13. *Pādma Saṁhitā*, Ed. Madras 1974, I. 5.17.

14. *Sātvata Saṁhitā*, Varanasi, Ed. 1982, 1.25-; also termed as *Cāturātmya*.

15. "ekavyūhavibhāgo vā kvacid dvivyūha-saṁjñitaḥ
trivyūhaścāpi saṅkhyātaḥ caturvyūhaśca kathyate."
— *Mahābhārata*, XII.336. 53.

16. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, Intro. pp. 22-25.

17. Vide *Pādma Saṁhitā* of Pāñcarātra Āgama and *Mṛgendra Tantra* of Śaivāgama.

18. *Śivapurāṇa*, vi.51.27; *Matsyapurāṇa*, 191.6 etc.

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PART IV

VEDĀNTA AND MODERN SCIENCE

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30

VEDĀNTA IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

KARAN SINGH

The great secret of the persistence of Indian culture unbroken down through the millennia lies in its unique capacity for regeneration and reintegration from era to era. The whole history of Indian thought from Vedic times right down to the present century can be interpreted as a series of such regenerations — some of them within the orthodox systems and others, such as Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, outside the orthodox parameters. The *Upaniṣads* themselves, which may be considered the high watermark of Indian philosophical thought, came at the end of a long period of mystical outpourings represented by the *Vedas*. Thereafter with the advent of Buddhism and its subsequent decline, a situation was reached around the 8th century A.D. in which intellectual confusion and chaos seemed to reign supreme. There were numerous conflicting creeds and teachings, the combined result of which was to throw the whole intellectual and spiritual life of India into darkness and confusion.

It was at this critical juncture that there appeared one of the most remarkable religious figures in the history of mankind, Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. In a short life span of 32 years, 16 of which were spent studying the scriptures, Śankara virtually single-handedly wrought a revolution in the sphere of philosophy and religion. This extraordinary man combined in himself all the four Yogas so greatly praised in the Hindu cultural tradition.

As a *jñānayogi* Śaṅkara wrote luminous commentaries upon the *prasthānatrayī*, the three pillars of the Vedānta — the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. He also wrote many other original philosophical texts, including the celebreted *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, in which he brilliantly expounded the viewpoint of Advaita Vedānta. As a *karmayogi* he travelled the length and breadth of India, established four *maṭhas* in the four corners of the country thus strengthening the foundations of national unity, and reorga-

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nized the *sannyāsi* order into a system which continues down to the present day. As a *bhakta*, Śaṅkara wrote beautiful hymns in praise of various deities of the Hindu pantheon — Śiva, Kṛṣṇa and the Divine Mother — all of which represent different facets of the same divine reality. And as a *rājayogi* he developed spiritual powers of the highest level, which manifested in many startling miracles associated with his travels and, above all, in his voluntary exit from life in the Himalayas at the early age of thirty two.

Each one of these aspects of Śaṅkara's life can be expounded at considerable length, but for purposes of this International Seminar I have confined myself to examining the concept of Vedānta which, in my view, is extremely relevant in this nuclear age. While I have not quoted directly from Śaṅkara, I have based my approach upon his interpretation of the *Upaniṣads*, and look upon this paper as a modest tribute to one of the most outstanding saint-philosophers that the world has ever known.

Mankind today is in a major period of transition, as significant as the earlier ones, from nomadic to agricultural society, from agricultural to industrial and from industrial to post-industrial society. We may be too close to the event to grasp its full significance, but it is now quite clear that we are in the throes of a major change. Whether it is in the field of politics or economics, communications or culture, a powerful new globalism is developing. Indeed, the outstanding features of the second half of the twentieth century has been the collapse of the materialistic paradigm that has dominated world thought for many centuries. What may be called the Cartesian-Newtonian-Marxist paradigm has broken down, and with it the materialistic philosophies based upon that view, whether Marxist or capitalist, can also be seen to have failed. With the impact of post-Einsteinian physics, quantum mechanics, Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and many other conceptual revolutions, the old structures have begun to crumble. 'Solid matter' dissolves into 'waves of probability', and the new physics seems to be approaching the mystic vision of which seers and sages of all traditions have spoken.

The predominant consciousness of the human race reflects its evolutionary situation, and it would be true to say that at this crucial evolutionary crossroads mankind is groping for a new model, a new philosophy, a new paradigm, a new consciousness to replace the old. And it is no coincidence that this is happen-

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ing at a juncture when mankind is in supreme peril; not from another species, not from outer space, but from itself. There has been a tragic divergence of knowledge and wisdom, and from deep within the human psyche there has developed a terrible poison that threatens not only our own generation, but countless generations yet unborn; not only our own race but all life on this planet. We are perhaps like the fabled continent of Atlantis, rich and resplendent beyond compare, but ultimately sinking below the waves, unable to survive its own technological ingenuity.

Ancient myths often illuminate the human predicament, and there is a powerful Hindu myth of the churning of the Milky Ocean (the Samudra-Manthana) which speaks to us today across the millennia, symbolizing as it does the long and tortuous evolution of consciousness on planet earth. In this great myth the Devas and the Asuras, the bright and the dark powers, both cooperated in the churning of the ocean. This went on for aeons, until at last the great gifts began to emerge — Kāmadhenu, the all-giving cow and Ucchaiśravas, the divine horse; Kalpavṛkṣa, the wish-fulfilling tree and Airāvata, the divine elephant. These and other gifts appeared, and were happily divided between the two sides. The churning proceeded, as its ultimate objective was the Amṛta Kalaśa, the pot of ambrosia, the elixir of immortality for which even the gods crave.

Suddenly, without warning, the ocean started to boil with a deadly poison — the Garala — a new, malign dimension of which neither the Devas nor the Asuras had any knowledge. Rapidly the poison spread through the three worlds — the water, the land and the skies. The churners fled helter-skelter in terror, striving to escape from the deadly fumes, forgetting all the gifts that they had accumulated. And the Śiva-Mahādeva appeared, the great, primal divinity aloof from the avarice and materialism of the Devas and the Asuras. He collected the poison in a cup and drank it, integrating it into his being. Then the danger passed. Order was restored, and chanting hymns to the glory of Śiva, the participants returned.

This myth vividly illustrates the human predicament today. Prolonged churnings have given man the great gifts of science and technology. There have been incredible breakthroughs in medicine and communications, agriculture and electronics, space travel and cybernetics. We now have enough resources and technology to ensure for every human being on earth, the physi-

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cal, intellectual, material and spiritual inputs necessary for a full and healthy life. And yet surely the poison is also upon us. Billions of dollars and rubles, pounds, francs and rupees are spent everyday on the manufacture of monstrous weapons with unprecedented power of destruction. It is estimated that there are now well over fifty thousand nuclear warheads on planet earth, each a thousand times more powerful than the bombs that devastated Hiroshima an Nagasaki at the dawn of the nuclear age; each with more explosive force than used by both sides in the entire second World War.

There is overwhelming evidence to show that any kind of nuclear war would not only shatter human civilization as we know it; it would also poison the air and the oceans and render earth virtually uninhabitable, a charred and ravaged planet incapable of supporting more than extremely primitive lifeforms. Whether this happens through political foolishness or an accident, a flight of geese or a malfunctioning computer chip, it matters little. With all our tremendous knowledge, man has finally come to a single three-letter *mantra* — MAD — Mutually Assured Destruction. Thousands of years ago, at the dawn of human civilization, the Vedic seers had also discovered a three-letter *mantra* — AUM — as the symbol of the divinity that pervades the universe. Perhaps the time has come when we should revert from MAD to AUM, so that this greatest of all transitions, the transition to the global consciousness, can be safely completed and the earth can become a crucible for the next major step in evolution.

It is in this chilling context that the necessity for an alternative philosophy of life becomes so intense, and because of the universal values that it enshrines, the Vedānta represents precisely such an integrated and universal philosophy. Based upon the collective wisdom of generations of seers and sages, and brilliantly expounded by Ādi Śaṅkara, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavadgītā* stand as testimony to the magnificent spiritual endeavour and achievement of ancient India. This vast corpus of wisdom, collectively known as the Vedānta, provides insights which can be of crucial value for the survival of the human race in this nuclear age. While the field is extremely broad and rich, I have abstracted five major principles of the Vedānta that collectively can provide the framework for a philosophy to sustain the emerging global consciousness on our planet.

The first and most basic concept is that of the all-pervasive

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Brahman — "*Īśāvāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat.*" Whatever exists, and wherever it exists, whether it is moving or not, is permeated by the same divine power and force. This is an important realization, because many philosophies have postulated dichotomies between God and the world, between matter and spirit, between good and evil, between the divine and the devil, and so on. But the Upaniṣadic view is that in the ultimate analysis all is a manifestation of the divine. Indeed, there can be no manifestation without the divinity behind it, and this in a way parallels the realization of modern science. Previously, in the classical science of Newton, there was the incurable dichotomy between matter and energy; but in the post-Einstienian situation there is the realization that whatever exists is really the same energy. It may appear as a particle or as a wave; it is essentially the same energy. So the unified-force theory towards which the scientists are desperately probing has its spiritual counterpart in the concept of the all-pervasive Brahman of the *Upaniṣads*. The greatest realization is to see Brahman everywhere, above or below, to the right or to the left, within or without. This is the first important concept of the Vedāntic knowledge, the all-pervasive Brahman.

The second is that this Brahman resides within each individual's consciousness, in the Ātman. The Ātman, as it were, is the reflection of this all-pervasive Brahman in individual consciousness; but the Ātman is not ultimately separate from Brahman; it is a reflection of that Brahman, it is a part of it. One of the examples given in the *Upaniṣads* is that as, when a great fire is lighted, millions of sparks fly up out of the fire and then fall back into it, so from Brahman arise all these millions of galaxies and into Brahman again they all ultimately disappear. The concept of the Lord residing within the heart of each individual (*īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ hṛddeśe tiṣṭhati*) is the second great insight of the *Upaniṣads*, and the relationship between the Ātman and Brahman is the key-point upon which the whole Vedāntic teaching revolves. All the four *yogas* are directed towards bringing about the union between the Ātman and Brahman — *jñānayoga*, the way of wisdom, *bhaktiyoga*, the way of emotional rapport, *karmayoga*, the way of dedicated works, and *rājayoga*, the way of ecstacy. All of them are directed towards bringing about the union between the all-pervasive Brahman without and the immortal Ātman within.

Flowing from this, we come now to another important Ved-

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āntic concept which is that all human beings, because of their shared spirituality, are members of a single, extended family. The *Upaniṣads* have a beautiful word for human beings, "*amṛtasya putrāḥ*", children of immortality. It is an extra-ordinary phrase. We do not look upon human beings as essentially sinners, weak and cringing, begging and supplicating some unseen being seated in some seventh heaven. Rather, we are children of immortality because we carry within our consciousness the light and the power of Brahman, regardless of our race or colour, our creed or sex, or any other differentiation. That is the basis of the concept of human beings as an extended family, "*vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*". A famous verse points out that the division between 'mine' and 'yours' is a small and narrow way of looking at reality, indulged in by people with immature minds. For those of the greater consciousness, the entire world is a family. This is another great insight of the *Upaniṣads*, peculiarly relevant at this juncture in human history.

We come now to a fourth major philosophical concept of the *Upaniṣads*, the essential unity of all religions, of all spiritual paths — "*ekam sad-viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti*" as the *Ṛg-Veda* has it; the truth is one, the wise call it by many names. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* has a beautiful verse which says that in the same way as streams and rivulets arise in different parts of the world but ultimately flow into the same ocean, so do all these creeds and religious formulations arise in different times and areas, but, if they have a true aspiration, ultimately reach the same goal. Here is a philosophy which cuts across barriers of hatred and fanaticism that have been built in the name of religion. The Vedānta is a universal religion; it accepts the infinite possibilities of movements towards the divine; it does not seek to limit or confine us to any particular formulation. It not only accepts, but also welcomes a multiplicity of paths to the divine, provided those paths are genuine movements towards divine realization and not merely intellectual gymnastics and disputations.

It is a little like climbing a mountain with several different starting places. If we keep arguing at those points, we will remain miles apart, but when we actually start climbing and moving upwards, then, as we approach the summit, our paths will begin to converge, and ultimately when we get to the top we will all meet there, because there is only one summit. Similarly, once we really start moving upwards in the field of spiritual endeavour

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we will find all our denominational and intellectual differences gradually losing their importance, and as we rise to the summit we will realize the spiritual oneness of humanity.

The fifth Vedāntic concept is the concept of the welfare of all beings, "*bahujana-sukhāya bahujana-hitāya ca.*" The Vedānta seeks the welfare of all creation, not only of human beings, but also of what we call the lower creatures. In our arrogance and ignorance we have destroyed the environment of this planet. We have polluted the oceans, we have made the air unbreathable, we have desecrated nature and decimated wildlife. Thousands of species have become extinct because of our hubris as human beings; and thousands more are on the verge of extinction. But the Vedāntic seers knew that man was not something apart from nature, that human consciousness grew out of the entirety of the world situation, and therefore they had compassion for all living beings. That is why the Vedānta constantly exhorts us that, while we are working for our own salvation, we must also shun the path of violence and of hatred. We must seek to develop both elements of our psyche, the inner and the outer, the quietist and the activist. Indeed, these are two sides of the same coin, so that we must work not only for our own salvation, but also for the welfare of the world. While working out our own destiny, we also have a social responsibility; and as long as we are embodied, we have to continue to work for the welfare of all beings.

These five concepts from the Vedānta — the all-pervasive Brahman; the Ātman which resides in all beings; the concept of the human race as members of a family regardless of all differences; the idea that all religions are essentially different paths to the same goal; and the concept that we must work for the welfare of society as a whole, for this entire ecosystem and not only for ourselves — when taken together provide a comprehensive world view which can greatly help humanity in the process of globalization upon which it has embarked.

Gradually a world civilization is being born, and it has to be born if mankind is to survive in this nuclear age. Science and technology have given us tremendous power, and that power, if used for benign purposes, can abolish poverty and hunger, malnutrition and misery, illiteracy and unemployment from the face of this earth by the end of this century. It can be done; seven days expenditure on world armaments can abolish hunger in Africa, ten days expenditure on world armaments can abolish the

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debt of Latin America. But instead, the equivalent of one trillion US dollars every year are going into the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction so awesome that they can hardly be imagined. We now have enough nuclear power to destroy the human race forty times over, to commit not only racial suicide but terricide, the destruction of planet earth.

We must never forget that power by itself is neither good nor evil; there is the *daivī śakti* and there is the *āsurī śakti*, the benign power and the malign power. The worship of power, of science, is not enough; we also need to recapture wisdom, compassion, understanding. We can now survive only if we have an alternative ideology to the one which has led mankind to this position, and if we boldly act in harmony with that ideology.

The Vedānta provides such an alternative ideology; and if even at this late hour we can imbibe some of its universal truths, we can perhaps reverse the mad rush towards destruction and begin the long, slow climb back to sanity. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, the seer says, "*vedāhametam puruṣam mahāntam ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt*," — I know that great Being, shining like the sun beyond the darkness; it is only by knowing him that you can overcome death, there is no other way to immortality. The immortality of the *Upaniṣads* is not merely survival after death, which in any case is taken for granted. It is the transcending of birth and death; it means that our consciousness is raised to a state where we are not obliged to be reborn again and again in the cycle of *saṁsāra*.

Can you imagine what it is like when a caterpillar, an ugly landbound worm, goes into a chrysalis and a miraculous metamorphosis takes place so that it emerges as a beautiful, radiantly coloured butterfly? That is the sort of metamorphosis that the *Upaniṣads* envisage for human consciousness, and that we need for the new global consciousness. We must change from our earthbound consciousness into this bright, multicoloured, global consciousness which can still alight upon the ground like a caterpillar, but can also fly into the air which the caterpillar could not do.

That, as I see it, is the true significance of the Vedānta, so ably expounded long ago by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. I will close with that immortal Vedic prayer that seeks to lead us from the untruth of ignorance into the truth of knowledge; from the darkness within into the light above; and from the cycle of birth and death into immortality. That is the highest achievement of the *Upani-*

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ṣads; and that is the goal towards which we all must strive:

asato mā sadgamaya,
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya,
mṛtyormā amṛtam gamaya.

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31

EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PARALLELS BETWEEN MODERN PHYSICS AND MYSTICISM

J. A. YAJNIK

Werner Heisenberg has very rightly observed that "it is probably true quite generally that in the history of human thinking the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet. These lines may have their roots in quite different parts of human culture in different times or different cultural environments or different religious traditions; hence if they actually meet, that is, if they are at least so much related to each other that a real interaction can take place, then one may hope that new and interesting developments may follow.[1]

Fritjof Capra's famous book, *The Tao of Physics*, opens with the above quoted observation of Heisenberg and proceeds to explore the parallels between modern physics and eastern mysticism. Most of the parallels suggested by Capra are concerned with metaphysical commitments of modern physics and the mystical traditions of the East. It is our opinion that the metaphysical viewpoints identified by Capra and the parallels indicated by him are highly controversial. Therefore, a meaningful dialogue concerning them necessitates an elaborate elucidation and critical evaluation.

However, this paper is not concerned with the metaphysical part of the dialogue because it aims at working out the epistemological implications of the only two of the parallels explored by Capra. Of these two, one is discussed by him in chapter (3) entitled 'Beyond Language' and the other in chapter (8) entitled 'Beyond the World of Opposites.' We have chosen these two parallels between modern physics and mysticism because it appears to us that here "they are at least so much related to each other that a real interaction can take place. We will be attempt-

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ing to give good reasons to believe that if 'the real interaction' is seriously allowed to take place, then there will be something like Copernican revolution in the methodology of both science and religion. They will then be able to assume really complimentary character and will be able to work most effectively for the total well-being of the totality of beings in the universe.

The ineffability of mystical experience is very well known. Hence, we are not here commenting upon the Upaniṣadic saying, "*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha.*"[2] For the first time in the history of science, the founders of quantum theory in physics came across an experience which was ineffable, because not translatable in terms of ordinary thought and language. The experience for them was highly unusual and very much disturbing. The situation in which these scientists found themselves can be visualised by the following words of Heisenberg:

> I remember discussions with Bohr which went through many hours till very late at night and ended almost in despair; and when at the end of the discussion I went alone for a walk in the neighbouring park I repeated to myself again and again the question: Can nature possibly be so absurd as it seemed to us in these atomic experience?[3]

It was not the absurdity of nature but the inadequacy of ordinary language that was responsible for the disturbing situation. As Capra says:

> The knowledge about matter at this level is no longer derived from direct sensory experience, and therefore our ordinary language, which takes its images from the world of the senses, is no longer adequate to describe the observed phenomena. As we penetrate deeper and deeper into nature, we have to abandon more and more of the images and concepts of ordinary language.[4]

The beyond language parallel described above implies the following epistemological shift in the methodology of science together with its auxiliary ethical approach.

(i) Once the objective existence of atomic and subatomic world which lies beyond sense experience is granted and it is admitted that the 'experience' of this world is ineffable in character, credibility of genuine mystical experience of ultimate spiritual reality cannot be questioned on scientific grounds. This means that mysticism emerges as the most relevant epistemology for

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attaining objective knowledge of ultimate spiritual reality.

(ii) If the importance of mysticism is recognised as the epistemology for the knowledge of the most subtle and highest truth, then the development of intuitive capacity has to be regarded as the most desirable thing for any seeker of truth. This is so because the search of truth in any field is bound to be enhanced by the development of the capacity which is revelatory of the highest truth. This is confirmed by the following passage in which Capra has described the role of casual intuitive insight in the development of scientific knowledge.

> Rational knowledge and rational activities certainly continue the major part of scientific research, but are not all there is to it. The rational part of research would, in fact, be useless if it were not complemented by the intuition that gives scientists new insights and makes them creative. These insights tend to come suddenly and characteristically, not when sitting at a desk working out the equations, but when relaxing in the bath, during a walk in the woods, on the beach, etc. During these periods of relaxation after concentrated intellectual activity, the intuitive mind seems to take over and can produce the sudden clarifying insights which give so much joy and delight to scientific research.[5]

The role which intuitive insights have so far played in the advancement of scientific knowledge is not because of the scientists, but rather in spite of them. That is, intuitive insights have come to them, they have not tried systematically to develop intuition in order to be benefited in their search for truth.

(iii) If the development of intuition is accepted as an obligation by the scientist, then, he will have to practise some form of yoga, because yoga is the classically established science of the development of intuitive consciousness.

(iv) When the scientist gets existentially involved in yoga, his mathematical or logical acumen will enable him to see that he should very vigilantly avoid working for the military or for the development of that kind of technology which disturbs ecological balance.

Capra has not talked about this kind of epistemology and ethics in his *The Tao of Physics*, but he would whole-heartedly agree with us. This is evidenced by the following passages from a recent interview with him.

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(a) One day, when I met him (Krishnamurti) after a lecture, I said 'I'm a young scientist, just beginning my career. How can I free myself from thinking when knowledge through thinking is all that one acquires in science?' Krishnamurti solved the problem for me like a zen master, with one stroke. He said, "First you are a human being; then you are a scientist. As a human being you have to go beyond thinking to solve the human dilemma. As a scientist, you can use your analytic mind, which is wonderful and marvellous, but in a more general sense, as a human being, you need to make contact with the metaphysical state of consciousness.' I don't remember exactly everythieg he said, but I do remember him saying, 'First you are a human being; then you are a scientist.' That was a tremendous influence, and it solved a major problem for me. After that, I started a systematic study of Eastern religious thought.'

(b) I began as a physicist drawing parallels between physics and the Eastern tradition. I now believe that physics cannot be placed in the center of the world view. The most appropriate center is the theory of living systems. You put life in the center, and you study life in its multiple manifestations, and you can make statements about what life is, what mind is, and what consciousness is in this context. Physics would be defined as the science of nonliving systems, but the cosmos is a living cosmos. It is mindful, or endowed with intelligence. We must recognize that the earth is primarily a living system. This will lead to a certain social consciousness or action.[7]

(c) In trying to dominate Nature we are killing ourselves. We have to realize that we cannot control Nature. Nature, the living cosmos, is too large for us to control. We have to go back to science before the seventeenth century, to cooperate with Nature and try to uuderstand it, not in order to dominate but to be inspired. During the Middle Ages, scientists used to pursue their fields for the Glory of God. Their purpose was not to dominate but to be enlightened, to achieve enlightenment. That kind of attitude has to return, or science will not survive. And it is precisely this attitude that the mystical tradition already has. In mystictsm you study reality by

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using your own body and mind as an instrument. You don't try to dominate and control. That is the profound change of heart that I think needs to happen.[8]

Having clarified the epistemological implications of the parallel of 'beyond language,' we now proceed to consider the parallel of 'beyond the world of opposites.' The following two passages quoted by Capra are sufficient for introducing the paradox:

(i) If we ask, for instance, whether the position of the electron remains the same, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron's position changes with time, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron is at rest, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether it is in motion, we must say 'no'.[9]

(ii) It moves, it moves not, it is far, and it is near, it is within all this. And it is outside of all this.[10]

The following two passages from Capra himself are suggestive of the epistemological implication which we want to emphasise:

(a) Faced with a reality which lies beyond opposite concepts physicists and mystics have to adopt a special way of thinking where the mind is not fixed in the rigid framework of classical logic, but keeps moving and changing its viewpoint.[11]

(b) The laws of atomic physics "were discovered in the 1920s by an international group of physicists including Neils Bohr from Denmark, Louis De Broglie from France, Erwin Schrodinger and Wolfgang Pauli from Austria, Werner Heisenberg from Germany and Pauli Dirac from England. These men joined their forces across all national borders and shaped one of the most exciting periods in modern science which brought them for the first time into contact with the strange and unexpected reality of the subatomic world. Every time the physicists asked nature a question in an atomic experiment, nature answered with a paradox and the more they tried to clarify the situation, the sharper the paradoxes became. It took them a long time to accept the fact that these paradoxes belong to the intrinsic structure of atomic physics and to realize that they arise whenever one attempts to describe atomic events in the traditional terms of physics. Once this was perceived, the physicists

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began to learn to ask the right questions and to avoid contradictions. In the words of Heisenberg, 'they somehow got into the spirit of the quantum theory', and finally they found the precise and consistent mathematical formulation of this theory.[12]

Just as the scientists got into the spirit of the quantum theory it is very much necessary for the philosophers of religion and mysticism to get into the spirit of mystical experience in order to dissolve the seemingly paradoxical character of the descriptions of mystical experience. As there is unanimity regarding the characteristics and objectivity of mystical experience among world mystics of all ages, it is not unreasonable to hope that if logical principles for the consistent interpretation of mystical experience are found out, then humanity can hope to attain unanimity with respect to the metaphysical views regarding the nature of ultimate spiritual reality and its relationship with the universe throbbing with multiplicity.

We thus see that the consideration of the 'beyond language parallel' leads us to propose a mystically oriented epistemological and ethical revolution in the field of science; whereas the considerations of the parallel of 'beyond the world of opposites' prompts us to propose a logically oriented epistemological revolution in the field of religion. It is hardly necessary to say that if these proposals are taken seriously, then 'real interaction' between science and religion will take place. In the spirit of cooperation and complimentarity, they will then be able to help humanity to realize its highest possible goals on this very earth. Religion and science will then both be 'this-worldly' but that 'this world' will be a 'divine world.'

NOTES

1. Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (Fontana Paperback, London, 1983), p. 9.
2. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 2.4.
3. W. Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1963), p. 42.
4. F. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
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8. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

9. J.R. Oppenheimer, *Science and the Common Understanding* (Oxford University Press, London, 1954), pp. 42-43.

10. *Īśopaniṣad*, 5.

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32

VEDĀNTA AND MODERN EPISTEMOLOGY*§

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Abstract

Ancient Indian philosophy covered a very wide range of topics in metaphysics, and epistemology, the science of knowledge, in particular, was encompassed by it with special reference to the sources of knowledge, the nature of human thought, and of the ultimate Reality which governs all of existence. This article deals briefly with aspects related to logic, perception and acquisition of knowledge, ultimate source of reason, etc., as are contained in ancient Indian culture with special reference to Vedāntic and Jaina philosophy. Logic in India was not solely the subject matter of 'grammar' of reasoning, but a more lively one of the techniques of argument and discussion. Yet some very recondite aspects of multivalued logic (developed in this century) are not only evident but are explicitly stated in ancient Indian philosophy. Thus, *syād-vāda* (the doctrine of doubt) envisages two new states of truth (namely D for doubtful and X for impossible) in addition to T and F for truth and falsehood respectively. These have been shown to be representable as two-element Boolean vectors by the author in his BVMF (Boolean vector-matrix formulation of logic). An even finer subdivision of truth in *sapta-bhaṅgī* into seven truth values, postulated by Jaina philosophers, has an isomorphism with the BVMF representation of modern quantifier logic in terms of three element vectors. In *Nyāya* philosophy also, logic is conceived of as dealing essentially with the removal of doubt, and this is represented by the *vidyā* operator in the author's BVMF. Even more, the third state introduced by Brouwer by discarding the principle of excluded middle has its counterpart in the third *avaktavyaḥ* state of *sapta-bhaṅgī*, and this

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also forms the third basic state in the BVM formulation of quantifier logic.

The use of contradictory attributes to describe the ultimate Reality is also discussed, and it is pointed out that this is the only way to state the nature of the "unknowable knowledge", the all-pervasive Brahman of Hindu philosophy. Since this supreme power permeates the whole of existence, and hence also the mind of man, it can be deduced that the human mind should be capable of understanding nature and all of nature's laws.

1. Scope of the Article

As is well-known, epistemology is the science of the theory of knowledge. Since this encompasses the whole of science, philosophy and religion, we shall only discuss some general features of the processes of obtaining knowledge, and of applying it, for which purpose, very precise and broad-based concepts had been developed in ancient Indian philosophy. In doing this, we shall essentially focus on Vedānta literature consisting of the *Upaniṣads* and also of the later developments of systems of logic, such as in Nyāya and Jaina philosophy. We hope to show that these concepts are eternal and are as valid now as when they were proposed and are as applicable to modern science and mathematics as for speculations on existence, truth, and validity, which were the main considerations when they were formulated

Obviously, the article cannot be comprehensive and only some significant considerations will be discussed and commented upon. Since the conference deals mainly with the religious philosophy of Indian culture, and not essentially with metaphysics as such, we shall keep the argument rather general and not discuss particulars in great detail. ([5] is a classic that can be referred to in this connection.) Essentially the following topics will be covered generally.

(a) *Nature of Scientific Knowledge*

In discussing how knowledge is obtained, we shall also ask questions which are partly religious in nature, such as "What is the basis of existence?" "What force drives the Universe?" "Is what we see, hear and feel, the real nature of things, or are they only a partial picture of these as seen by human perception?"

(b) *Process of Deduction*

In doing this, the first consideration is the question of methods of gaining knowledge. It consists of three parts — observation, inference and codification. Of these, inference is the

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most significant one and requires essentially the operation of the human mind. Actually, the process of inference as considered in classical Indian logic, requires both semantics and logic, which are clearly distinguished in modern philosophy. The intermingling of concepts of cause and effect relationship of factual data, and of association in concept, plays a very important part in *Nyāya* philosophy, as we will see below. In the related Jaina philosophy of logic, the notion of indeterminism, or indefiniteness, plays a very crucial part.

(c) *Universal Law*

Having considered the ways in which knowledge is acquired, the more interesting question as to whether the human mind will be capable of exploring and understanding the whole of existence (which can be equalized to the modern idea of "nature") becomes significant. Here, Hindu philosophy has a very simple answer, *viz.*, that man is part of nature and the laws governing nature are also the laws governing his thought procesess. Hence, if there is a directing force which covers all of existence, then all of it is, in principle, understandable by the human mind. The question whether this force is a person in the form of "God" who oversees everything, or a force, or a power, called "nature" which is the root cause of all order in things, is not material to Hindu philosophy. Both concepts are freely used and they may be technically termed as 'monotheism' and 'monism'. The assumption of a personal deity does not in any way detract from the concept of universal order. We shall show later that the *Upaniṣads* contain many statements about the nature of the ultimate reality which reveals the unity and identity of all of existence. We shall explain this more in detail and it is true that, even in Western philosophy of the present era, the concept of "law", "order", "regularity", "cause and effect,' and related concepts are attributed not only to the human mind, but also to universal Nature as such.

(d) *Universal Religion*

These considerations lead to a very simple synthesis of religion and science, in ancient Indian culture. One is not, in any way, contradictory to the other. It is perfectly possible to be a true scientist and believe in the scientific method of exploration of nature and, at the same time, accept the existence of a universal power that encompasses all these and directs it. In fact, according to the *Upaniṣads*, this supreme entity "Brahman" is even

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beyond the domain of knowledge, *i.e.*, in the domain of "unknowable knowledge." We shall briefly comment on this.

We shall consider first the relevant aspects of Indian logic with special reference to the concept of "Syādvāda", or the "principle of indeterminancy".

2. Logic in Ancient India and Modern Times

The science of discussion is known as *Nyāyaśāstra*. But *Nyāya* means much more than pure logic which is defined as the "grammar" of an argument in the modern sense. In fact, *Nyāya* encompasses the whole process of reasoning [1, 3] — both its grammar (logic) and its veracity (semantics). The word '*Nyāya*' in its dictionary sense signifies the concept of "right" or "justice". Therefore, the discipline of *Nyāyaśāstra* is the science of right judgement or true reasoning. In the classical example of an argument, analogous to a syllogism, in the *Nyāya* system, the argument has five parts — (a) "proposition" based on verbal testimony, (b) "reason" based on inference, (c) "example" based on perception, (d) "application" based on comparison, and finally (e) a "conclusion" based on all the above four steps. In view of this, classical Indian logic did not make a detailed analytical examination of the rules of logic, but rather applied itself to a study of types of argument required for special situations. However, in doing this, it has produced some exceptionally beautiful approaches which do not appear to have been developed in modern logic except in this century.

We shall comment on two specific aspects which are only vaguely conceived of in *Nyāya*, but which are explicitly studied and discussed in Jaina philosophy (and which have been followed up by the author in a rigorous mathematical way, and has led to a theory of multivalued logic in general), *viz. syād-vāda* and *saptabhaṅgī*.

(a) *Syād-vāda — General Remarks*

This is based on the most conspicuous of the doctrines of Jaina philosophy, namely that the conception of reality is inherently indeterminate and can only be based on knowledge that is *syād*, meaning 'may be'. According to it, nothing can be understood completely and the nature of our knowledge about anything — be it material, intellectual or spiritual — can always only be partial and limited. The answer to the question, 'Is this true?' about anything, can in the ultimate sense be answered only as 'may be true or may not be true'. This may look very puzzling

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at first. However, if it is understood that what is known about anything at a given time is only based on the knowledge which is ultimately what is available at that time, and that new knowledge may give a different picture, then the concept of universal doubt becomes obvious and reasonable. For example, Newton's Laws of Motion were taken to be the absolute basis for physics, and a nineteenth century scientist would have answered the question, "Are Newton's Laws absolutely valid?" by a firm definite 'yes'. But twentieth century physics found it necessary to modify it, and replace it by Einstein's equations. In fact, nobody can say, even now, that Einstein's equations are the last word, because newer observations and theories can make still further changes in them. In this sense, any theory (or any knowledge) derived from necessarily limited, incomplete, observation of facts, can never be absolutely true.

(b) *Syād-vāda — Analytical Comments*

This purely philosophical concept, which is obviously a very valid one in epistemology, was put in a practical form by the Jaina philosophers. Thus, in addition to two states of truth, 'yes' and 'no' of standard logic, two more alternatives were added, namely 'yes and no' and 'neither yes nor no'. Of these, the former means that the answer to the question "Is it true?" can be *either* yes or no, with both possibilities being present, so that the question is still unanswered, or unanswerable. The answer to the question is then said to be in the state '*syād*' or 'may be'. On the other hand, the latter (neither yes or no) means that neither of the possibilities 'yes' and 'no' is the correct answer, so that it signifies the impossibility of the statement, and hence the contradiction of the argument.

The state of '*syād*', *viz.*, 'may be true or may be false', is not at all a strange state of truth for it is being applied by everybody almost every day. The simple answer 'no comment' to a question means, in effect, that the answer is 'may be yes or may be no', so that the fact in question has the state '*syād*'. Even in mathematics, the formulation of the proof of a theorem, or the disproof thereof, leads one from a state of indefinite knowledge about the theorem to definite knowledge that the theorem is true or false. (See below for a Boolean algebraic expression of this transition from indefiniteness to definiteness.) It is very much to the credit of the Jaina philosophers that they gave explicit mention of such a state of truth.

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It has been shown by the author that the above four states of truth — true (T), false (F), may be (D for doubt) and impossible (X for contradiction) can be expressed by the set of four 2-element Boolean vectors, namely (1 0), (0 1), (1 1) and (0 0) [9]. In this, we make use of the standard procedure in modern logic of expressing the answers 'yes' and 'no' to the question "Is this true?" by the Boolean numbers 1 and 0. In Boolean algebra, the product of two Boolean numbers $a \otimes b$ is the same as the arithmetical product $a \times b$, while the Boolean sum $a \oplus b$ is practically the same as the arithmetical sum $a + b$ except for the fact that $1 \oplus 1 = 1$. The 2-element vectors mentioned above give an explicit expression of the ideas of *syād-vāda*.

If we denote the truth value of a statement by the Boolean vector $\underline{\underline{a}} = (a_\alpha \; a_\beta)$, then $a_\alpha = 1$ signifies that the statement can be true, and $a_\beta = 1$ signifies that it can be false, and $a_\alpha = 0$, and $a_\beta = 0$, indicate that they cannot be true, and false, respectively. Then it can be seen that the vectors (1 0) and (0 1), for T and F respectively mean that in the former case the statement is definitely true and never false, and in the latter case that it is never true and definitely false. On the other hand, the vector (1 1) means that T is possible ($a_\alpha = 1$) and that F is also possible ($a_\beta = 1$), so that it signifies the *syād* state D. This *syād* state can be described in classical logic by the expression 'T or F ($T \vee F$)' and it means that the answer to the questions, "Can it be true?" and "Can it be false?" are both 'yes', which is exactly what the state D mentioned above connotes.

On the other hand, the vector (0 0) has both $a_\alpha = 0$ and $a_\beta = 0$ so that neither T nor F is possible, and it is in the fourth state X mentioned above. In the symbology of classical logic, it can be given the expression "$T \wedge F$" which is a contradiction and leads to the result that the answer can be neither true nor false and that the statement in question is impossible in the logic under consideration.

(c) *Acquisition of Knowledge — Vidyā Operator*

The above ideas that everything is *syād* to start with, and that the acquisition of knowledge consists of the removal of doubt and the creation of definiteness, are found even in the *Upaniṣads*.

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Thus, the classical hymn "*asato mā sad gamaya*" which means 'lead me from absence (of knowledge, *i.e.*, ignorance) to presence (*i.e.*, enlightenment),' contains in itself the essence of epistemology, *viz.*, that the acquisition of knowledge consists of the removal of doubt. In fact, even with reference to the science of *Nyāya*, Vātsyāyana says as follows [7]: '*tatra nānupalabdhe no nirṇīte-arthe nyāyaḥ kim tarhi saṁśayite-arthe.*' This means 'logic functions neither with regard to things known to be false, nor with regard to things known to be definitely true, but it functions only with regard to the things that are doubtful.' Thus Indian logic deals with the whole field of epistemology in general, *viz.*, methods of clearing ignorance, or doubt, and obtaining definite information, or knowledge. As mentioned above, even logic of mathematics in its ultimate analysis depends on this one process, *viz.*, deduction from known facts of another new fact, or theory, which *clears the doubt* about the latter entity. Therefore, it is natural that one should have an operator in Boolean algebra that has this very purpose of combining two bits of information about the same thing, *viz.*, one which is doubtful and the other which is definite, and obtain in consequence the definiteness as the resultant state of knowledge about the question in hand.

In the Boolean algebraic system mentioned above using 2-vectors (for which the name "Syād Nyāya System" — SNS in short — has been given), the Boolean operator signified by the symbol $\underline{\otimes}$, which is described below, can be shown to do this operation and therefore it has been given the name "*vidyā*" which, as mentioned above, denotes at the same time both of the concepts, 'learning' and 'knowledge'. The operator* is also given the symbol $\underset{\sim}{V}$ when we wish to emphasize the *vidyā* character of it, and it can be defined as follows:

$$\underline{a} \underset{\sim}{V} \underline{b} = \underline{c} \Leftrightarrow a_{\alpha} \otimes b_{\alpha} = c_{\alpha}, \quad a_{\beta} \otimes b_{\beta} = c_{\beta} \qquad (1)$$

It can then be verified that the *vidyā* operator has the consequences given in Table 1 below for all the four *syād nyāya* states T, F, D, X.

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* Other operators representing logical connectives like 'and', 'or', 'if' are 2 x 2 matrices in this algebra (see [9]).

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Table 1: *Truth table of the vidyā operator* $\underset{\sim}{V}$ ($\underset{-}{\otimes}$)

$\underset{-}{\otimes}$	T	F	D	X
T	T	X	T	X
F	X	F	F	X
D	T	F	D	X
X	X	X	X	X

The entries in this table that are relevant to our discussion are

$$T \underset{-}{\otimes} D = D \underset{-}{\otimes} T = T \tag{2a}$$

$$F \underset{-}{\otimes} D = D \underset{-}{\otimes} F = F \tag{2b}$$

$$T \underset{-}{\otimes} F = F \underset{-}{\otimes} T = X \tag{3}$$

The first one (2a) means that if two bits of information with respect to a question about the same thing, coming from two different sources, are of the form, of one being 'doubtful' and the other 'yes', then, their superposition leads to the definite answer 'yes'. In other words, the definiteness overrides the indefiniteness and is the resultant final answer as a result of application of the *vidyā* operator. Similarly, if the two bits of knowldege are, one saying 'no' and the other 'doubtful' as in (2b), then also the *vidyā* operator acting on the two will lead to a 'no' as the resultant. Once again we note that it is the definite answer that comes out. Thus, the qualitative description of the process of obtaining *vidyā* which is mentioned above, gets quantitatively formulated in a mathematical form by the operator $\underset{-}{\otimes}$.

It is interesting that the same Boolean operator $\underset{-}{\otimes}$ also leads to Eq. (3) which is the test for contradiction. Thus, if the two bits of knowledge about the same thing are such that one says that it is true, while the other says that it is false, then the two of them are mutually contradictory, and therefore neither of them can be true. This result is produced by the same *vidyā* operator applied between T and F as in Eq. (3). Thus,
$(1\ 0) \underset{-}{\otimes} (0\ 1) = (0\ 0)$, so that

$$T \underset{\sim}{V} F = F \underset{\sim}{V} T = (0\ 0) = X \tag{4}$$

meaning that there is contradiction.

This very simple representation of the ideas of *syād-vāda* has

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been developed and expanded to cover the whole subject of propositional calculus in logic by the author (Refs [9], [10], and a series of Matphil Reports published by his laboratory). However, this is not the whole story, for Jaina philosophy has gone further and given a description of even more subtle subdivisions of the states of truth than those obtained in *syād-vāda* as mentioned above.

(d) *Indefinite States in Sapta-bhaṅgī*

The doubt in the above examples arose essentially because of lack of precise knowledge as to the truth or falsity of the statement. But this is not necessarily the case. It is quite possible that the proposition itself is neither capable of being shown to be true nor of being shown to be false, *i.e.*, the *syād* state is inherent in the statement of the proposition under consideration. This was also conceived of by the Jains. In fact, they went further and stated that the nature of knowledge has a seven-fold division, which may be stated as follows.

1. May be, is (*Syād asti*).
2. May be, is not (*Syād nāsti*).
3. May be, is inexpressible (*Syād avaktavyaḥ*).
4. May be, is and is not (*Syād asti nāsti*).
5. May be, is and is inexpressible (*Syād asti ca avaktavyaḥ*).
6. May be, is not and is inexpressible (*Syād nāsti ca avaktavyaḥ*).
7. May be, is, is not and is inexpressible (*Syād asti ca nāsti ca avaktavyaḥ*).

This formulation which is called *sapta-bhaṅgī* is an even more precise classification of states of truth than *syād-vāda*.

It will be noticed that just as *syād-vāda* is obtained by making all possible combinations of two elements *asti* (is) and *nāsti* (is not), *sapta-bhaṅgī* contains various combinations of three elements, namely *asti* (is), *nāsti* (is not) and *avaktavyaḥ* (inexpressible). The very word 'inexpressible' expresses the fact that it requires careful examination to obtain its full significance. It is a modification of the doubtful state of *syād-vāda*, in which the definite states 'yes' and 'no' are both removed and yet something remains which is a truth value. The best way of appreciating the existence of such a state of truth is by taking an example. Suppose we ask the question, "Is it true that if X is an integer then it is a prime?" the answer is 'not always, not never, but sometimes.' In the framework of *sapta-bhaṅgī*, 'always true' is *asti*, 'never true' is

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nāsti, 'sometimes true but neither always and neither never' is *avaktavyaḥ*.

These three states have been shown by the author to be expressible by means of 3-element Boolean vectors of the type $(a_\gamma\ a_\delta\ a_\varepsilon)$ in which each of a_γ, a_δ, a_ε, can have two values 1 or 0. In fact, they form an excellent basis for representing all logical formulae in the so-called quantifier logic of predicate calculus. We shall not go deeply into this, but refer to articles by the author (Refs [10] and other Matphil Reports). However, to indicate the similarity of the approach to the 2-vectors for *syād-vāda*, Table 2 gives the 3-vector representation of the seven states of truth of *sapta-bhaṅgī* which are obtainable by having the three elements of $\underset{\approx}{a} = (a_\gamma\ a_\delta\ a_\varepsilon)$ each taking two possible values 1 and 0.

It will be noted that this leads to 2^3 or eight possibilities of which seven are in the list given in *sapta-bhaṅgī*. The eighth one has the description (0 0 0) which means 'neither is, nor is not, nor inexpressible', meaning contradiction in this higher order logic.

As mentioned above, *sapta-bhaṅgī* has a close relationship to quantifier calculus in which the three basic Boolean vectors (1 0 0), (0 0 1), (0 1 0) have the connotation, 'for all', 'for none', 'for some, but not for all and not for none'.

A complete Boolean vector-matrix formulation (BVMF) of the so-called predicate calculus, including SNS and quantifier logic, can be set up with this starting point. In addition to various matrix operators,* this also employs, in particular, the *vidyā* operator for 3-vectors having exactly the same characteristics as with 2-vectors for *syād-vāda*. The equation in *sapta-bhaṅgī*, analogous to Eq. (1), is

$$\underset{\sim}{a} \underset{\approx}{V} \underset{\approx}{b} = \underset{\approx}{c} \Leftrightarrow a_\gamma \otimes b_\gamma = c_\gamma,\ a_\delta \otimes b_\delta = c_\delta,\ a_\varepsilon \otimes b_\varepsilon = c_\varepsilon \quad (5)$$

It can be readily shown that the *vidyā* operator gives, in this case also, the information content common to both of the input statements $\underset{\approx}{a}$ and $\underset{\approx}{b}$ and can lead to a more definite state of knowledge for the output statement $\underset{\approx}{c}$ than what is possessed by either of the inputs $\underset{\approx}{a}$ and $\underset{\approx}{b}$. Also, as with SNS, here also, the *vidyā* operator leads to contradiction (0 0 0) if the two inputs are mutually in-

*As with SNS, here also logical operators 'and', 'if', 'or' etc., are expressible by 3 × 3 Boolean matrices.

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consistent with one another, *e.g.*, 'possibly true' (1 1 0) and 'definitely not true' (0 0 1) together will lead to (1 1 0) $\underline{\otimes}$ (0 0 1) = (0 0 0). (For further details see [10]).

Table 2: Sapta-bhaṅgī states of truth of Jaina philosophy and the corresponding quantifier states

Sl. No.*	Boolean 3-vector	Quantifier calculus description
1	(1 0 0)	For all $(\forall)$
2	(0 0 1)	For none $(\neg \exists)$
3	(0 1 0)	For some $(\exists \wedge \neg \forall)$
4	(1 0 1)	For all or none $(\forall \vee \neg \exists)$
5	(1 1 0)	There exist $(\exists)$
6	(0 1 1)	Not for all $(\neg \forall)$
7	(1 1 1)	Universal doubt $(\exists \vee \neg \exists)$
8	(0 0 0)	Contradiction** $(\exists \wedge \neg \exists)$

The idea of a third state which is neither definitely true nor definitely false but yet has a definite meaning, has been introduced into logic only during the last few decades (see [4] for details). Prominent among the scientists whose theories contain a third state are Brouwer and Lusakiewicz. Of these, Lusakiewicz's third state is identical with our SNS state D. However, the exact connotation of the third state in Brouwer's system of 'Intuitionistic Mathematics' [2], is different. It is close to the state '*avaktavyaḥ*' (0 1 0) of *sapta-bhaṅgī*. We shall briefly discuss this below. More than three states are also possible, and the general theory of such a multivalued logic is widely used in computer science now-a-days. Perhaps, the most prominent among its formulations is that due to Post (see [4]). The author has also shown that BVMF

* The serial numbers correspond to the list of *sapta-bhaṅgī* states given above and the eighth state of contradiction described above.

** Meaning that the conclusion of the argument is impossible in this logic.

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can treat any general multivalued logic. Since these matters go deep into mathematical logic, we shall not discuss them any further.

However, there is one tantalizing type of statement — which is neither in the state 'true' nor in the state 'false' but in the state of 'contradiction', but yet having semantic value — which is utilized in ancient Indian philosophy for describing the nature of the ultimate Reality. We shall discuss this in the next section. While doing this, we find it necessary to combine ideas of pure logic, which is the 'grammar' of reasoning, with ideas involving semantics which deals with the 'contents' of the argument, and it is found very difficult to separate one from the other. The discussion here is not intended to be a rigorous one, but rather a general one, illustrating the use of paradoxes in ancient Indian thought for explaining such subtle concepts, which may be said to be even "beyond knowledge".

For correlating this aspect of Indian philosophy with modern logic, we need to accept one basic idea of Brouwer's intuitionistic logic which is the denial of the principle of excluded middle. This principle says that the answer to any question in logic should be either, 'yes' or 'no', but cannot be both. In fact, we demand this principle in BVMF for each element of the Boolean vector, which is obvious from the definition of the *vidyā* operator for contradiction. However, as we will see below, this contradictory state can still lead to semantically useful information as is materially used in Indian philosophy and as Brouwer states explicitly for his formulation of logic.

3. Concepts Expressed Via Contradiction and Paradox

There are many examples in Vedāntic philosophy of statements of the type mentioned above, that are apparently paradoxical and which might be consequently held to be illogical, but which at the same time express profound philosophical truths of a highly esoteric type. Thus, in classical 2-valued logic, if two statements A and B together lead to a contradiction, then each nullifies the other and nothing can be deduced from 'A and B is true' In fact, the contradiction signifies that either A or B is untrue. However, this is not necessarily the case if the system containing the argument is not closed.

Anticipating the essential nature of the argument to be discussed, we shall consider two statements as follows.

(A) If x is true, then x is false.

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(B) If x is false, then x is true.

It is very easy to see that, in classical logic, this is equivalent to 'x is both true and false' which is clearly a contradiction, so that the normal conclusion would be that x is not a valid statement.

(a) *A Paradox about Infinity*

However, we shall now indicate how, under suitable conditions, the two contradictory statements A and B can refer to a real object, or concept, and yet can have an answer having semantic content without contradiction. This is the classical example of infinity, which is defined in mathematics as a number which satisfies the equation,

$$\infty = \infty + 1 \qquad (6)$$

Thus, to the two questions, 'Is infinity the greatest number?' and 'Can infinity be greater than itself?', the answer will be 'yes' to both. By concept ∞ is a number greater than all finite numbers; but on the other hand, it can be greater than itself, and therefore, something is greater than it. The point that is made is that the apparent paradox that the above two statements about ∞ are mutually contradictory arises because the system is not closed, and it is possible that the tacit assumption, that the quantity denoted by ∞ satisfies the laws dealing with finite numbers, may not be valid. In such a case, an assertion that neither the truth nor the falsity of a statement can be proved to be valid may not lead to a contradiction, but to a valid deduction having definite semantic content in a higher order multivalued logic. Thus, the answer 'no comment' or 'may be true and may be false,' violates the law of excluded middle in 2-valued classical logic, but has one of the permissible states (namely D) in the higher order SNS logic with four truth values describable by 2-element Boolean vectors. So also, the state described (in SNS) as 'D, but not T and not F' leads to the state (0 1 0) in the still higher order 3-element Boolean algebra relevant for *sapta-bhaṅgī*, and this state is identical with the concept of a third state envisaged by Brouwer.

(b) *Description of the 'Infinite' Via Paradoxes*

All this is really relevant to pure mathematics, but the purpose of stating them here is to show a close analogy of these ideas of modern logical analysis with the concepts in Indian philosophy of the 'Infinite' (*ananta*) which is one of the attributes of Brahman (absolute Reality). The *Upaniṣads* contain many statements to the effect that this Reality has contradictory properties such as

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It is both larger than itself and smaller than itself (*aṇor-anīyān mahato mahīyān*);
We can take the whole of it away from it, and what remains is still the whole of it (*pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate*);
If you think you know it, then you do not know it; if you think you cannot know it, then you know it (*yasyāmatam tasya matam, matam yasya na veda saḥ; avijñātaṁ vijānatāṁ, vijñātam avijānatām*).

Because it is something that transcends reason, the ultimate Reality is describable only by such contradictory statements, and it is something that stands by itself outside all existence and yet at the same time, it permeates all of existence.

The logical similarity to the example of infinity in mathematics is very close. In the case of mathematical infinity, we have to say that although it is a number, it does not belong to the class of finite numbers, and therefore it can have contradictory properties such as being both greater than and smaller than itself. As a consequence, the logicians associated with the school of Brouwer believed that the logic of infinite sets cannot be given in terms of the classical logic of a 'yes' and 'no', but requires also the third middle state discussed above which can be expressed by 'not demonstrable to be yes or no'. In fact, in such cases, the unprovable nature arises because *infinity is unattainable* and therefore the theorem dealing with such infinite sets *cannot be demonstrated* to be either true or false.

In the same way, the normal rules of knowledge pertaining to science and human thought in the field of epistemology can only *indicate* the nature of Brahman, but are *insufficient to define it or explain it*, since it is beyond the realm of existence, and the domain covered by human thought.

4. Vedānta and the Scientific Spirit

We shall consider a little further the nature of this supreme entity in relation to the subject of epistemology. The incorporation of the existence of such an entity (be it a He, or an It, or a Power) makes the whole question of the relationship of man to the universe around us very simple. Thus, in Vedānta, Brahman is described as "*ṛtaṁ satyam param brahma*" (order, *i.e.*, law, truth, supreme Brahman) which emphasizes its role in the process of generating the laws of nature, and the orderliness of the phenomena therein. And then it is said that it is "*manasā mano yad*"

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(That which is the mind of all minds) and "*yo manasā na manute yenāhur mano mataḥ*" (He who is unknowable by the mind, but by whom, they say, all minds are known). These statements indicate that the question whether man can comprehend all of nature is answerable straightway by a 'yes' — except for the fact that nature of this supreme power that guides all this is beyond complete comprehension. (See [8] for further discussion of this unknowable knowledge.)

In the above sense, Vedānta has ultimately the same purpose as science, *viz.*, the pursuit of "*ṛtam* and *satyam*" — law and order and the truth thereof. This makes it difficult to comprehend the dichotomy between science and religion that is felt by the scientists of the modern age. For instance, Schroedinger says in his book *Nature and the Greeks* [6] —"In a treatise on physics or biology, albeit a popular one, to digress to the metaphysical aspect of the subject is considered impertinent, and if a scientist dare, he is liable to have his fingers rapped and be left to guess whether it is for offending science or the particular brand of metaphysics to which the critic is devoted." Such an attitude is not at all relevant if one accepts the Vedāntic spirit, for in its ambit, spiritual enquiry is the same as intellectual enquiry and it can deal with any aspect of human endeavour, be it science, religion or philosophy (see the article by the author on 'Philosophy of Science and Religion' [11] for an amplification of this). Schroedinger has pointed out that the ancient Greeks had a much more open mind and that the scholars of that era were both practical scientists and at the same time metaphysicists enquiring after the nature of reality. As we have pointed out, this feature is even more evident in ancient Indian thought, and as mentioned in the beginning, the Hindu religion is not at all at variance with the concepts and beliefs of modern science.

Finally, to round up this article, we shall quote a poem, written by the author and included in [8], dealing with unknowable knowledge.

Paradox of the Paramātman

Is all this there by chance?
Or by sheer necessity?
Is there a guiding force?
Or does it evolve by itself?
The answer is simple, but strange —
"It is all these, all at the same time."

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The guiding force
Is itself the guided.
It runs everything;
But is, itself, all of it.
He is omnipresent;
Omniscient, omnipotent,
Nature's Law is God's Hand;
No! Nature is the Universal Truth.

That is the paradox,
He is nowhere to be found;
Yet He is everywhere,
Seek, and ye shall find,
Seek where? Inside, outside?
Yes, It is both within and without.

Can It be both cause and effect?
Isn't one before the other?
You can't ask such questions;
In that place, all is same —
Before, after, behind, in front,
Up, down, all merged in one.
Undifferentiated,
Infinitely varied,
Particle and wave,
Matter and light,
Energy and essence,
Space and time,
White and black;
All one, all equal,
If you can but perceive it.

Eyes cannot reach there,
Nor ears, nor any senses;
Not even reason, not mind.
Only true devotion,
Unmixed meditation,
Merging with all,
Yet away from all,
Seeking the unknown
Not here, not there,
But all within you!

Antarātman is Paramātman.

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The author is deeply grateful to Professor Satchidananda Murty for the invitation to contribute this article for the conference. It deals with the results of the author's studies on logic and mathematical philosophy carried out during his period of work as Jawaharlal Nehru Fellow from 1968-70, as Professor of Mathematical Philosophy at the Indian Institute of Science from 1978-81, as CSIR Distinguished Scientist from 1981-83 and as INSA Albert Einstein Professor from 1984 onwards. He would like to express his thanks to all these organizations for the support — in particular, the University Grants Commission for grants in the research project 'Studies on Epistemology' and the Director of the Indian Institute of Science for all facilities and assistance that were provided during these years.

Since this article is intended for a conference, the subject is dealt with at a rather informal level and full references are not given. A list of books and articles for further reading, and a list of the author's publications cited in the text are appended.

NOTES

A small list of books for further reading is as follows:

1. S. S. Barlingay, *A Modern Introduction to Indian Logic*, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976.

2. L. E. J. Brouwer, "On the significance of the Principle of Excluded Middle in Mathematics" in *From Frege to Godel — A Source Book in Mathematical Logic*, Edited by Jean van Heijenoort, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass 1971. (A simple description of Brouwer's ideas is available in the article on "Mathematics, Foundations of" in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Chicago, Vol. 14, p. 1039, 1966 Edn.

3. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin (India) Limited, Bombay, 1976.

4. N. Rescher, *Many-valued Logic*, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York, 1969.

5. B. Russell, *Human Knowledge — Its Scope and Limits*, George Allen and Unwin Limited, London, 1948.

6. E. Schroedinger, *Nature and the Greeks*, Cambridge University Press, 1954.

7. S. C. Vidyabhusana, *A History of Indian Logic*, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 1978.

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References to papers by the author quoted in the text are as follows:

8. "The Unknowable Knowledge — an exposition of the Kena Upanisad," *The Yoga Review*, 1, pp. 191-206, 1981.

9. "Syād-Nyāya-System (SNS) — A new formulation of sentential logic and its isomorphism with Boolean algebra of Genus 2" *Current Science*, 51, pp. 625-636, 1982.

10. "Vector-matrix representation of Boolean algebras and application to extended predicate logic (EPL) Parts I and II," *Current Science*, 52, pp. 292-302 and 335-341, 1983.

11. "Philosophy of Science and Religion," *Journal of Dharma*, 8, pp. 110-119, 1983.

Mathematical Symbols used in this Article

T, F, D, X

$\underline{\underline{a}}$, $\underline{\underline{b}}$, $\underline{\underline{c}}$

$\underset{\sim}{V}$

$\underset{\approx}{a}$, $\underset{\approx}{b}$, $\underset{\approx}{c}$

$\oplus$, $\otimes$, $\underline{\oplus}$, $\underline{\otimes}$

$\Leftrightarrow$, $\wedge$, $\vee$, logical "equal to", "and", "or"

$\neg$, $\forall$, $\exists$ logical "Not", "For all", "There exist"

a_{α}, a_{β}, b_{α}, c_{β}

α, β, γ, δ, ε — as subscripts in Greek

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PART V

PLACE OF ŚAṄKARA IN INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

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33

THE PLACE OF ŚAṄKARA IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY AND HIS INFLUENCE ON MODERN INDIAN THINKERS

HILTRUD RUSTAU

Sometimes we can find the statement that Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta represents a doctrine of salvation rather than a philosophy (1, p. 50, 2,p.74, p.141). This assessment can only be agreed with to a certain extent. Of course Śaṅkara's philosophical concepts are inseparably linked to religious ideas, and he himself understands his philosophy as a means leading from the sufferings of the impermanent world and the beginningless circle of rebirth to salvation by the objectless recognition of the identity of one's own self with the supreme spiritual being. But in this his understanding of philosophy corresponds to a widely spread concept in his time. The close connection between religion and philosophy was the common feature both in India and in Europe in the middle ages. Śaṅkara has been both an important religious reformer and a philosopher with great intellectual capacities. Under the presupposition that philosophy is to be understood as the endeavour to rationally grasp the world in its totality, to fathom its development, to recognise the position of man in the world, his ability of realising the world and his behaviour in society and to systematically explain the results of this endeavour, Śaṅkara justly can be called a philosopher. He rationally gives the reasons for his concept of the final identity of the world as well as the individual soul with Brahman, the non-dual all-comprehensive, eternal and unchangeable absolute. In deduction of this he gives the status of dependent existence of the phenomenal world and also the multiplicity of individuals to *māyā*. He outlines the process of the development of the phenomenal world and develops a gnoseology containing thoughts on the means of cognition founded on the assumption of two steps of truth in dependence of the chosen point of view of the empirical world or

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of the absolute. *Avidyā* as an uncorrect or false cognition of the true essence of the world plays a decisive role in his gnoseology. Further, Śaṅkara developed concepts on the rules and the importance of moral behaviour. Thus we find systematically explained reflections on all the three essential parts of philosophy, *viz.*, ontology, gnoseology and ethics, the philosophical importance of which consists mainly in the manner in which he interprets and synthesizes earlier developed philosophical conceptions and in his new constructions in trying to solve philosophical problems derived out of this. In this connection we have to mention, above all, not only the concept of the unity of everything existing and of the two-graded truth, but also the understanding of the philosophical process of development gradually leading from materialism as the lowest step to the absolute monism of Advaita Vedānta, taught by Śaṅkara, as the ultimate step. Important sources of Śaṅkara's philosophy can be seen mainly in the ideas of Yājñavalkya and in the teachings of Gauḍapāda, but he fell back also on Uddālaka's cosmogony giving it an idealistic interpretation, as well as the theory of development of the Sāṅkhya philosophy. Besides these roots, the post-Buddhistic *Upaniṣads* and Buddhist concepts like those of Nāgārjuna, especially those of the Vijñānavāda have played an important role in shaping his philosophy. We can find also some elements of logic and gnoseology developed by Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā as well as elements of Patañjali's Yoga. Thus we can draw the conclusion that Śaṅkara in its full extent has used the philosophical knowledge of his time, and he himself enriched the philosophical discussion very much by arguing comprehensively with all the important systems of that time.

Śaṅkara is frequently supposed to be one of the most important Indian philosophers of all time, sometimes also as the most important philosopher on the whole generally. If we really want to determine Śaṅkara's place in the history of Indian philosophy, a historical evaluation is the precondition. At first we have to ask about his importance in his time. What, *e.g.*, might have been the reasons for his commentary on the *Brahma sūtras* to have been the first amongst a probably long list of forerunners preserved up to our days?

The time Śaṅkara lived in is often called a dark one, a period of decline following the so-called Golden Age of the Guptas. But mostly it has been a formative time, a time of change in which feudal trends of social development got stronger and regional dy-

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nasties gained strength. National languages and popular cults developed. In the south of India the process of assimilation of the Dravidian and the North Indian culture was continued. The rule of the Pallava dynasty undoubtedly can be seen as a climax of this development. The Cheras of the Malabar coast Śaṅkara by tradition is linked with (3, p. 40) were closely connected with the Pallavas (4, p. 172). Temples as well as individual Brahmins were given big land grants. The cultural climate of those days was characterised by the decline of Buddhism and Vedic ritualism in the South, the evolution of Hinduism into the religion of the masses with a large variety of directions and the inclusion of new cults of the not yet Hinduized population into Hinduism and above all an active philosophical life. There was a contradiction between the religion of the ruling elite, based on the Brahmanical orthodoxy, and the multiformed popular cults, mostly centred around the devotion to a personal God. At the same time, notwithstanding the political decentralisation, there already developed a more or less cultural unity of the upper strata all over the country. Sanskrit, pushed back by the national languages to the position of a scholarly language only, spread all over India; and by this it became the linguistic base of the cultural unity.

The endeavour of the ruling classes was towards the integration of the many different popular religious faiths into the ruling ideology in order to strengthen the process of political consolidation of the feudal states by ideological means. For the same reason it was at the same time necessary to bridge the contradictions contained in the authoritarian Vedic tradition which the orthodox Brahmins relied on and to synthesize this tradition with the popular cults. It was mainly due to Śaṅkara that the Brahmin orthodoxy could successfully adjust itself to the new conditions of the feudal development in India.

Śaṅkara's religious activities can be called a part of an early middle age Hinduistic reform movement. He essentially contributed to the theological foundation of Hinduism notwithstanding the fact that he claimed to give only a correct interpretation of the content of the *śruti* literature; and he took pains to prove that his point of view, *i.e.* Advaita Vedānta, was the uniform teaching of this literature. But to call Śaṅkara a main representative of the Brahmanic restoration or of the Brahmanic counter-reformation (2, p. 51) does not contribute anything to a real understanding of this great personality.

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Śaṅkara effectively influenced the further philosophical development. His commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* was in the centre of a philosophical discussion lasting beyond the centuries. This discussion similar to that in Europe in those days was mainly focussed on the relation among God, man, and the universe. In this dispute new philosophical and theological concepts arose. The criticism of Śaṅkara was mainly centred on his devaluation of the world's reality, the strong individualism on the stress he laid on the privileges of *dvijas*. The greatness of Śaṅkara's conceptions first of all has to be evaluated with the demands of his time. His philosophy was elitistic and its social background was formed by orthodox Brahmins being the ideologists of the ruling classes. But on the other hand his philosophy also included many implications which were of interest also to the feelings and hopes of the broader masses.

In the 11th century Śaṅkara's philosophy most probably was not much known in the north of India, a conclusion which can be drawn from the fact that Alberuni did neither mention Advaita Vedānta as a philosophical system nor the name of Śaṅkara (5). He dealt with Sāṅkhya and Yoga and was deeply impressed by the *Bhagavadgītā* of which most probably he knew another version as that commented on by Śaṅkara (6). He gave some information on the *Purāṇas*, the epics and on Jainism. It might be that Gauḍapāda was meant by the hermit Gauḍa, who is said to have written a book on salvation and on the process to become God (5, p. 132). But the name Śaṅkara we do not find. In analysing the philosophical development of India we can draw the conclusion that up to the 17th century most probably Advaita Vedānta was a philosophical system amongst others which flourished in India in the middle ages (7, pp. 1-8).

When the British came to India the existence of two philosophical systems caught their attention: Bedang (Vedānta) and Neodirsin (Nyāya) (8, p. 120). In Bengal Nyāya was the dominating system, and at the end of the 18th century corresponding to ancient reports in nearly every Bengal town we could find a Nyāya school (8, p. 128). The other systems mostly had been absorbed by Vedānta or Nyāya, and as independent system they only lived in the shadow. An exception, however, has to be made regarding the South and Kashmir, where Śaiva Siddhānta and Śaivism respectively were flourishing. When in the beginning of the 19th century the development of Indian early bourgeoisie

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started, a philosophy was needed which could correspond to the demands of the new social development. What was asked for was a philosophy of liberty, equality and brotherhood, backing the demand for releasing human creativity and the development of personality and a rationalist world view, a philosophy which was in line with the natural tradition of the country in order to be effective. The demand for justice and equality had to put off its abstract character, for it was included into the dispute with the colonial rule. At the same time the widely spread religiosity of the population had to be taken into account, and in order to strengthen the new social development a religious reform became necessary. Thus the developing modern Indian philosophy was confronted with a whole bundle of tasks coped with in Europe by Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment and Romantics. First of all, philosophical penetration of social problems had become necessary. Nyāya philosophy mostly concentrated on logic and gnoseology, whereas the different directions of Vedānta were well suited to the further development and re-interpretation according to the new demands. For the first time these new philosophical endeavours took shape in Ram Mohan Roy's considerations. He was the first who on modern times made effective the humanistic implications of the Vedānta philosophy by developing out of its structure the philosophical explanation of the equality of man and the demand for charity as well as for active social work. But he also on a theoretic basis gave explanations for the unity of the world and the supremacy of reason.

If Ram Mohan Roy belongs to a tradition which goes back to Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Ramakrishna was mostly influenced by Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, although some influence of the Bhakti movement can be seen too. Ramakrishna in the form of an indirect protest against the colonial rule stresses the equality of religions. In putting forward this claim he essentially relied on Śaṅkara. Ramakrishna's teachings can be summed up in four points. (1) All religions essentially are true, they have to be looked at as only different ways leading to God. On the one hand, this concept was opposed to sectarianism of the Hindu society and was meant to create harmony among all religions in order to unite the Indian people notwithstanding the religious differences. On the other hand, he stressed the equality of the Indians and their religions thus rejecting the activities of the Christian missionaries, this being important for the maintenance of

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cultural identity. (2) God is pervading everything; he has to be recognised also in every human being: *jīva* is Śiva. Service to man not only has to be seen as a way to God, but is itself already service to God. (3) Following Śaṅkara, Ramakrishna looked at the different philosophical systems as steps on the way to the supreme philosophical knowledge, *i.e.*, that of the Advaita Vedānta. (4) In the field of ethics Ramakrishna stressed the necessity and value of action which according to the *Bhagavadgītā* should be done free from selfish motives.

Whereas in the teachings of Ramakrishna only an indirect protest against the colonial rule found its expression, the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda can be seen as a reflection of the development of a radical wing of the national liberation movement at the end of the 19th century. All his teachings were directly linked to the national question. Swami Vivekananda can claim the credit for having been the first who developed a comprehensive social concept based on Advaita Vedānta. If Ramakrishna had mainly stressed the equality of religions, Vivekananda, continuing this line of thinking, developed out of the main positions of Śaṅkara's philosophy the demand for equality of human beings. Especially he used the idea of each man's individuality and of the unity of the universe contained in Śaṅkara's philosophy.

In Vivekananda's teachings we can find two main aspects, the demand for equal rights for men as well as for nations and the endeavour for the development of the personality. Vivekananda took over Śaṅkara's concept of the finally sole existence of Brahman and the only relative reality of the phenomenal world, but he emphasized that the time had come for practically using this knowledge, *i.e.*, applying Vedānta to the everyday life of the common man. According to the demands of his time, Śaṅkara was mainly concerned with proving the all-comprehensive existence of Brahman, by which the determination of the universe as *māyā* was included, and explaining the essence of salvation and the way to this goal. Vivekananda very much admired Śaṅkara who "... had caught the rhythm of the Vedas, the national cadence...his whole life's work is nothing but that, the throbbing of the beauty of the Vedas and the Upanishads." (9, VIII, pp. 278-279) But at the same time he criticized Śaṅkara's detachment from the world and his exclusiveness: "Śaṅkara left this Advaita philosophy in the hills and forests, while I have come to bring it out of those places and scatter it broadcast before the work-a-day

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world and society." (9. VII, p. 160) Mostly he criticised that Śaṅkara did not feel with the masses, that, although he had a great intellect, he had no great heart (9, II, p. 265). Vivekananda felt with the suppressed masses of his mother country, recognising at the same time that, without including them, it would not be possible to overcome colonial suppression and to open the way to a new flowering time of India.

Vivekananda very much stressed the point of universal brotherhood. If the absolute alone with which every individual is identical exists, then every human being by his very essence is divine and there does not exist any fundamental difference between men: "...man is man all the world over, the same wonderful human nature is everywhere represented." (9, I. p. 386) He strongly rejected not only every caste discrimination in India as well as every racial or social discrimination in the countries of the West, but also privileges in general. Out of the Advaita teachings he also derived national solidarity: "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother." (9. IV. p. 413) In continuing Ramakrishna's thoughts he demanded to see God in all men and to serve God by serving them.

It is not surprising that Vivekananda's protest against social inequality found continuation in the concept of an ideal society drawn up by him, where lower strata of society were raised to the level of the higher. Vivekananda combined the Hindu conception of the four ages and of the four *varṇas* with the belief in the future socialist society, governed by the Sudras, the fourth class: "Everything goes to show that socialism or some form of rule by the people, call it what you will, is coming on the boards. The people will certainly want the satisfaction of the material needs, less work, no oppression, no war, more food." (9. V, p. 132) Man, according to Vivekananda, is individual in being universal and not in being particular. Out of this assumption, Vivekananda conceived the demand for reconstructing society in such a way that each and everybody has the opportunity for the development of his personality. This, according to Vivekananda, concerns most of all the downtrodden masses, in whose lack of opportunities to develop their abilities the decline of India was rooted. India has lost her identity because the masses have been trampled under foot, and they should be raised in order to gain back identity for the nation. Here one reason can be seen for the high-ranking position Vivekananda always gave to education,

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which he rightly thought was of great importance for strengthening of self-confidence of his compatriots. He wanted them to overcome their feelings of being slaves which they had been taught by the British: "...do not believe that you are weak ... You can do anything and everything without even the guidance of anyone. Stand up and express the Divinity within you." (9. III, p. 284) "We are children of the Almighty ... How can we be nothing?" (9, III 376). Thus Vivekananda on the basis of Śaṅkara's philosophical concept developed a thorough humanist social philosophy responding to the demands of his time. Swami Vivekananda, called by Jawaharlal Nehru a bridge between India's past and present, has been one of the first who outside India appeared before the public articulating the national awakening of his country, and he has been the very first who outside India proclaimed the equality of men and by this also the necessity to overcome every form of colonial suppression backed by the philosophy of Advaita Vedānta. Vivekananda's Practical Vedānta quickly became widespread, and many people at present take it for granted that Śaṅkara has to be understood by the interpretation given by Vivekananda.

Also Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his philosophical views has been influenced by Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, although at the same time we cannot overlook a strong influence of Rāmānuja and Jñāneśvara, too, on him. Śaṅkara in the eyes of Tilak used to be an important authority whom in order to strengthen his point of view he again and again appeals to. He admires Śaṅkara: "The Ācārya was a superman and a great sage and he had by his brilliant intellectual power refuted the Jain and the Buddhist doctrines which had then gained ground on all sides and established his own Non-Dualist (advaita) doctrine..." (10. I. p. 18). But at the same time Tilak criticises Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Bhagavadgītā* as teaching renunciation. "Therefore, we must say that the first attempt to deprive the Gita of its Energistic form and to give it a Renunciatory doctrinal form was made by the *Śāṅkara-bhāṣya*." (10. I. p. 20) According to Tilak, Śaṅkara's teaching contains two different aspects, namely first the knowledge of non-duality, combined with *māyāvāda*, and secondly the way of renunciation. Whereas he affirms the first aspect, he rejects the second one (10. II. p. 701), *viz.*, that body, senses, etc. as well as the external world are transient, and that is the reason why they have to be looked at as *mithyā*, though this transient

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world of name and form is based on something eternally permanent. Therefore, Vedānta philosophy has laid down the doctrine that there is, under the ever-varying (that is, illusory) appearance both of the physical organs and of the external world, "some permanent (*nitya*), *i.e.*, real (*satya*) substance." (10. I. p. 305)

That means Tilak accepts the real existence of the external world, a concept which has to be seen in correlation with his philosophy of action. The demand of the *Gītā* for unattached fulfilment of one's own duties concentrated on social prosperity (*lokasaṅgraha*), was, for Tilak, closely linked to the demand for active participation in the national movement.

Another outstanding representative of modern philosophical thinking in India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, can also be mentioned in this connection. We can recognise the direct influence of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta on him to a much greater extent than in the case of Tilak. Similar to Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan connected the ideals of the French Revolution — liberty, equality and fraternity — with the divine nature of everything existing. Besides the equality of men he stressed the equality of religions, an idea which, from Ramakrishna onwards, constitutes an important ideological aspect of the Indian freedom movement. In addition to the stress laid on the unity of the world, the concept of *māyā* also belongs to the fundamental thoughts of Radhakrishnan's philosophical views. Like Tilak, he interprets it as expressing the transiency of the world in contrast to the unchangeability of Brahman. Radhakrishnan does not doubt the real existence of the world. As Radhakrishnan sees it, the fundamental reflection of Hinduism is in the formula of Uddālaka Āruṇi of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, "*Tat tvam asi*". This is to say, Radhakrishnan holds that all people are children of the eternal which implies the demand for active charity in Hinduism. But the relevance of Radhakrishnan's interpretation of Advaita Vedānta does not primarily lie in this field, but in his efforts to connect these ideas with a global view of the world. Radhakrishnan comes to the conclusion that all peoples of the world are part of a universal community. As early as 1926 he develops, in line with this idea, his ideal of the brotherhood of free nations living together harmoniously and maintaining their cultural particularities (11, p. 54). Again and again he repeats the demand for creating a genuine universal community; and this demand comes to the fore in the ninteen-fifties and sixties when Radhakrishnan sees the further

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existence of the human civilisation threatened by nuclear weapons. He thinks that nations are only intermediate stations in human development and that the nation state is not suitable to the modern world and finally does not correspond with the fundamental unity of the universe. His main aim is to overcome the isolation and the inner conflicts of the individuals as well as its selfishness and to spread the consciousness of human solidarity everywhere. If the world cannot see itself as a unity, he said, chaos would be the result. Thus Radhakrishnan finds out two prominent features in our time: the increasing unity of the world through interdependence and the danger of its total annihilation. Starting from this knowledge he becomes an active supporter of the policy of peaceful co-existence, since for him this policy of peaceful co-existence is the logical conclusion following the spiritual unity of the world, the universality of Brahman. Therefore, this policy is not a temporary compromise, but a fundamental need of mankind founded in its nature. Radhakrishnan can claim the credit for having applied the fundamental philosophical elements of Advaita Vedānta to the most decisive problems mankind today is confronted with: the avoidance of all wars, the prevention of a nuclear war and the realisation of the policy of peaceful co-existence among nations.

As a last example illustrating the long-lasting impact of Śaṅkara's view, Govida Chandra Dev (1907-1971), the East Bengal philosopher who, truly meeting the ideal of a *jīvanmukta*, sacrificed his own life in order to save his students, can be mentioned here. Directly following Vivekananda, Dev fully accepted the tradition of Advaita Vedānta. Of course, this did not mean to be uncritical towards Śaṅkara. According to Dev, the task of philosophy consists in realising the essence of reality thus distinguishing between the real as such and the real as it appears. The absolute is the substratum of the empirical world, but without losing its special essence or gaining additional attributes within this process. From the point of the world of experience, therefore the phenomenal multiplicity exists, whereas from the metaphysical point of view it does not exist. However, it is not the product of subjective imagination, for the absolute itself has something as its own which renders possible the appearance of the empirical world. This connection, named by the term *māyā*, cannot be explained but can only be grasped by intuition. Both change and permanence are real, because the empirical world is constantly

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changing, whereas the supreme reality, the substratum of every change, is completely free of every movement. Social inequality, exploitation and suppression do not go together with the principle of the absolute identity of all being. In this way Dev connects his fundamental philosophical concept with the demand for social activity aiming at the creation of a social order based on equality. The principle of identity has to be realised in the material sphere in the form of a social structure, where privileges as well as discrimination do not exist anymore. The society of future, therefore, will not be dominated by the so far privileged few, but by the comman men, who after thousands of years of suppression become self-confident. In the just society of the future there will be guarantee of individual development as well as collective security by fulfilling the material and spiritual needs of the common men. Therefore, according to Dev the creation of a classless society is a very urgent demand of our day. In view of the existence of nuclear weapons the realization of the unity of humanity gains vital importance. Out of the Advaita philosophy of unity it follows, according to Dev, that the future of mankind can only be seen in solidarity and peace, but not in conflict and war. Therefore, he strengthened the point that the morality of a person can only be measured in terms of its contribution to unity, understanding, peace and prosperity of mankind.

By way of conclusion it has to be mentioned that Śaṅkara's view of course can be interpreted in different ways. It means that regressive social forces also refer to him. However, this paper only aims at making evident the most important philosophical tendencies connected with Advaita Vedānta in the course of Indian philosophical development. These are tendencies which in our day display the humanistic potentiality contained in Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta as a philosophy of humanism. We can recognise a shift of accent in Advaita philosophy during its course of development following the philosophical and religious turn to the world in modern times. Instead of discussing the essence of Brahman and salvation, modern humanistic Advaita Vedānta is centred around equality of men and the fundamental unity of the world as a consequence of which men are liable to live together peacefully and to give up war and violence.

Coming back to the question of the greatness of Śaṅkara we can say that undoubtedly he was one of the greatest Indian philosophers. His greatness consists in his reflecting the ideological

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demands of his time in the most effective way, a fact which can be seen as the main reason why his philosophy has always played an important role in Indian history. I would like to conclude with the remark that in every philosophical discussion of peace the concept of Advaita Vedānta has to be taken into consideration.

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34

NATIONAL INTEGRATION, SECULARISM AND ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY OF VALUE

BIJAYANANDA KAR

National integration is, no wonder, a burning issue today at least in the context of India. India comprises of multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-ethnic groups of individuals and at the same time those individuals, somehow or other, belong to India as its bona fide citizens. Because of so much diversity the conflict and disharmony do arise frequently in different sectors and parts of the country and those, of course, stand as grave challenge to the very integrity of India not only as a political unit, but also so far as its national as well as cultural integrity is taken into account.

Here, a question may be raised as to how far the traditional religio-philosophical outlook which this country presents since antiquity is, in any sense, conducive to sustaining the spirit of national integration, or, to put it differently, how far the Advaita philosophy of value is compatible with the idea of national integration beyond any point of controversy. The issue is so framed that a clear straightforward answer either in the positive or in the negative sense is not easily possible. But merely, on account of that, one need not avoid the issue and abstain oneself from further conceptual exploration. For, at least one thing is clear that by such type of conceptual scrutiny many more facts concerning the issue are made explicit and consequently one attains a position to either solve or dissolve the problem.

I

Let us first take up the concept of national integration. It presupposes the point that within the nation itself there are people of various faiths, beliefs and attitudes; but they all, in spite of such differences and diversities, agree to remain under one single political set-up. This political attachment may not be only due to formal or legalistic agreement on a round table conference as

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it were, but it may have deep rooted religio-cultural foundation. For instance, such type of emotionally charged expression like 'Bharat Mata' is surely intended to bring different people remaining within India to a much closer bond of unity and in many quarters at least such type of emotional appeal does have some pragmatic significance. Several dharmic as well as purāṇic literatures obviously display a sense of cultural affinity to one nationality and thereby it serves, at least indirectly, the purpose of national integration.

But it should also be noted in this connection that national integration is primarily a political concern. It does have a political root and integration. There is a demand being based on non-religious needs and requirements. Nations unite and separate largely on political causes. This is not necessarily arbitrary and whimsical. There may be certain justifiable grounds at the social sector for making a move in such a direction. No nation is an absolute reality in the sense that it ever remains as a real entity. In accordance with the prevailing situation and circumstantial factors a nation is formed and political support becomes almost a necessary prerequisite. In our own time India and Pakistan have been created as two independent countries and those are said to have been formed on the basis of the theory of two nations. Again, for some political reasons, it was found in due course that Pakistan faced a challenge for disintegration and consequently Bangladesh has come into existence. Thus there is the birth of another nation. As long as that nation continues to remain, the spirit of nationality is obviously a living phenomenon which again is due to various socio-political factors. So the issue of national integration can never be consistently framed being divested from the political origin.

There has been a tendency in certain quarters to establish a view that political decision to either form a nation or to sustain a nation largely depends upon the religious beliefs and attitudes which the people at large belonging to a particular region commonly share. In this connection Iran as an Islamic state may be cited. The conflict between Israel and Palestine is largely found to be due to the difference between two distinct religious groups. Pakistan, at one phase, is declared by its political leaders as purely an Islamic nation based upon religious basis. The same point of view is also found to have been supported by the political leaders of Bangladesh. But though religion is used in all such

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cases for certain political purposes, the distinction between the conceptual frameworks of both politics and religion can easily be noticed even in these countries. For the sake of national stability there is no reason as to why a particular religion-based state is not to move for a secret pact or alliance with a foreign non-religion based nation for serving certain political objective. From such consideration it may seem quite plausible that religious feeling and national interest are not necessarily on the same scale and there is no justifiable reason as to why they cannot be conceived independent of each other.

Now, the issue may be taken up at the present Indian context. It goes without saying that India, as a nation, is established on secular ideology. A secular nation is said to be neutral to religion. In this context the Indian political leaders very often emphasise that politics and religion are different and as such any kind of infusing the idea of religious fundamentalism in the framework of political decision is ruled out. The Indian nation is not committed to any particular religion. Nobody is here either to be favoured or is to be looked down on the basis of adherence to any particular religious faith. Of course, in this context, it has been advocated by the constitutional experts that Indian secularism is aimed at national integration not by developing an adverse and negative attitude towards religion but by showing equal respect to all religions.

II

Only recently, secularism is a concept which has been brought under common usage in the Western intellectual circle. According to the Western formulation the concept has been introduced with a purpose to eradicate the transcendental supremacy over the empirical plane. Secularism is thus found as opposed to all forms of religious formulation that is based upon some sort of mystical dehumanised transcendence. In that way "secular" is opposed to "sacred" and is placed within the worldly humanistic framework. Basically secularism is grounded upon the philosophy of humanism and any move for transhuman supernatural form of God-realisation is excluded here. The secularist, in this sense, is supposed to be at least non-religious (non-theist), if not irreligious. Any supposition of attaining trans-empirical God's grace or compassion is never entertained in the secularist framework. In the political as well as national sphere secularism is thus aimed at preserving the interest of a group of people remaining as citizens

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in a particular political state. Those interests are worldly and empirical. They do not move beyond the human purpose. Thus secular framework at the national and political background need not necessarily be thought as opposed to the interest of people belonging to other nations and states. Because of the basic commitment for human welfare it has to accelerate the sense of mutual goodwill and understanding among different nations and countries. So national interest is not thought to be necessarily opposed to international understanding. This is because of the fact that both national and international points of views do have their basis on secular humanistic foundation.

In India, the situation is somehow different. Since antiquity, people belonging to this land are prone to different religious faiths. Particularly the so-called Hindu religious outlook is so deeply rooted in the average Indian mind that it is difficult (if not impossible) to bypass that tendency while trying to make a proper estimation of Indian secularism. To put it differently, the dharmic background of Indian secularism has got to be accepted as a powerful living phenomenon. Perhaps, in this sense, secularism here cannot be meaningfully operated without dharmic basis.

But the problem is: how can this be conceived? If secularism is anti-sacred, anti-theistic, anti-mystical, how can that have a synthesis with the dharmic framework? In recent past, only after independence, secularism as a socio-political ideology is very much found to have been advocated by the national leaders on the ground that this ideology, if properly understood and pursued, is likely to bring people of different faiths and attitudes within one religion as well as among other religions more closely. Consequently that would strengthen the political and also national stability of the whole country. Gandhi tried to achieve this end by emphasising the basic unity between different religious beliefs, particularly Hinduism and Islam. Gandhi is, of course, not the first person to boost up this trend of thought. But his appeal for spiritual unity has been intended to achieve a goal at the socio-political level. That all religious (theistic) beliefs are basically one and that transcendental supernatural God is the same in every religion are some of the cardinal presuppositions of this sort of spiritual secularism (as one may call it). Even after Gandhi, the other prominent Indian political leaders, social workers, nationalists move on more or less in advocating this point of view.

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But, in spite of the great boosting of this approach, it can be marked that such an idea of spiritual secularism is not quite effective in establishing the sense of mutual tolerance and harmony among different Indian citizens. People still are found to be opposed to each other on grounds of religious faiths. Religious dogmas, fanatic outlook and overall sense of fundamentalism reign supreme even now after forty years of independence. This has, no doubt, threatened the very stability of Indian nation and its integrity. I feel, it is primarily due to the fact that the much publicised slogan in this regard that *Īśvara* and *Allah* are one and the same seems to be neither effectively convincing to the mass so that it, in turn, modifies its religious practices nor is it doctrinally or theoretically so much non-controversial. It has to be conceded that different religions being so much based upon transcendence have almost lost their ground; and that is at least one of the reasons for which in the advanced age of science and technology the claim of religion seems to be somewhat dim. Religion, in the usual traditional sense, is of course confined to a sectarian closed outlook, and thus it cannot fruitfully contribute towards human welfare. So far as its lexical and popular meanings are concerned, religion always stands for some sort of supernaturalism. Religious craving, in some form or other, stands for the attainment of supernatural, mystical perfection in a world beyond. It is in this sense other-worldly and its concern for the present worldly existence is only provisional and secondary.

Thus religion, being understood in terms of supernormality and transcendence, can obviously have no contact with integration at the socio-empiric level. The socio-political outlook aspiring for integration is confined to the natural objective sphere. The term 'secular', in this sense, cannot even be understood in the sense of being neutral to religion (*dharma-nirapekṣā*). For even that implies that secularism cannot be understood without acknowledging religion. That is why standard authorities (both in India and abroad) define "secular" not in terms of religion but rather in terms of the present-worldly or empirical existence (*laukika*), as religion carries a definite sense of transcendence. In this sense, secularism has absolutely no reference to religion. Its object is to safeguard and foster human values. A secular state is one which is to create and encourage opportunity for sustenance of human ideals. And this can be easily pursued without any reference to religious framework. Rather religious sense of divi-

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nity and transcendence blocks the easy flow of human welfare at the concrete socio-political level. The objective of national integration being grounded on a secularist framework cannot thus be conceived as having any compromise with religious framework. Religion is not only irrelevant for the cause of national cohesion and solidarity, but also it is virtually a hindrance.

III

It has been indicated before that in the Indian context national integration cannot be accomplished without taking into account the religious dimension, because some form of religious sense has been thickly planted in Indian mind and it is thought that an Indian is naturally religious. Hence any attempt of infusing the sense of national integration in him cannot be meaningfully effective without acknowledging the deep-seated religious basis. It is thought that a religion-based social order (as it is thought to have been prevailed in India) can be well adapted to national consciousness provided one carefully emphasises that the significant feature of all religious enquiries never bypass man's hopes and aspirations here and now. Otherwise the talk of national integration and communal harmony will always remain no more than a visionary ideal.

It is exactly here that a sharp difference is often noticed between religious conservatives and religious reformists. While one group emphasises some dogmas and rituals as the very core of religious framework, another group wants to view religion through social service at the human context. While to one religion is social, to the other it is trans-social. Very often the traditional religious conservative authorities claim that religion in its fundamental essence can never accommodate any such reformative measures that overlook and bypass the vital institutional framework of religious order. On the other hand, the liberalists claim that the true or real sense of religious conviction can never neglect the human concern at the socio-empiric context.

Now, what is the way out? How does philosophising become effective in resolving the controversy? Let us take here Śaṅkara's Advaitism into the fold of discussion. Does Advaita supply any clue for resolving the conflict between religious and secular ideals? So far as tradition is concerned, Śaṅkara is acknowledged as a great Advaitin. His Advaita *darśana* is regarded as one of the most authentic and convincing expositions of Vedānta or *Upaniṣads*. As a philosopher, his standpoint is on rigorous rational foot-

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ing. Again, Śaṅkara is also acknowledged as a great religious advocate. His mission of revitalising the *sanātana-vaidika-dharma* and in this context his establishiug four great Advaita *maṭhas* in four notable religious centres situated in four corners of the country have paved a long way for religio-cultural unification which, in turn, is supposed to have boosted the cause of national integration.

So far as the common use of the term "*dharma*" is concerned, it can be noticed that there are at least two distinct meanings attached to it which have been well accepted in the tradition. *Dharma*, from one point of view, does have conspicuous similarity with religion. It accommodates within its fold priestly activity, prayer, worship, temples of various gods and goddesses. In this sense *dharma* is not very much far from what is of course understood as religion. There is the acceptance of theistic model with all its association of transcendental divine mysticism. Dogmas, rituals, scriptural authenticity and various types of institutionalised cults and denominations are thickly blended with this type of dharmic use. So far as this meaning is concerned, *dharma* is close to religion, and in this sense it is distinctly on a non-secular footing. Consequently it cannot consistently be interpreted as a boosting factor for national integration. The value for which this sense of *dharma* is found to have been set is distinctly sacred, other-worldly and supra-social. Here the dharmic craving stands for the attainment of supernatural perfection in the sense of mystic realisation of the identity of *jīvātmā* and *paramātmā* (*mokṣa*). Hence, in this formulation, it seems that the scheme of value presented by Śaṅkara, though of great significance from normal religious or dharmic standpoint, does not perhaps become effective in accelerating the cause of national integration. It, like any other religious formulation, probably suffers from a closed sectarian, dogmatic and divisive outlook. On the basis of history it is held in certain quarters that there is the presence of bitter hostility among Śāṅkarites, Rāmānujaites and Buddhists on the religious plane.

But, side by side, there is also distinctly noticed another use of the term in the Vedic/Vedāntic scriptural writings and which has been well taken up by the present-day philosophical community for developing a point of view which is not very far from a rational humanistic outlook so far as the entire religio-cultural perspective of India is considered.[1] From this angle it is held that

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dharma primarily stands for the socio-moral principle (*ṛta*) which puts the whole mankind on a common bond of unity and solidarity by way of emphasising such virtuous qualities in human personality like honesty, discipline, truthfulness, etc. which are meant to rationally balance individual needs and desires amidst social demands and requirements. *Dharma*, in this use, is a purely ethical principle at the secular plane. It does not have any such trans-human, supra-social theistic or even general theological outlook. It has a definite unreserved sense of secular concern. This approach can be said to be clearly philosophical rather than religious. Here singular emphasis has been laid upon human welfare at the socio-empiric setting and not on any mystical, obscurant idea of perfection.

Recently the Vedāntic concept of *mokṣa* in particular has been also interpreted in a type of secular non-religious setting. Quoting from different passages of Śaṅkara and other prominent Advaitins, Nayak has made an effort to establish the point that "tolerance in a typical form is inextricably related to the very structure of Advaita" and Hinduism, particularly in its most influential Advaita monistic perspective is distinctly "non-religious or secular religion."[2] The Vedic point of view is held by him as "the natural culmination in the concept of Brahman without a second in the Upanishads and the Advaita Vedānta" and the Advaita rendering is regarded by him as "transcendental monism". The value which it aspires is, according to him, placed at the setting of what he terms as "transcendental secularism". He has taken care to point out that in this context secularism is quite proper in so far as it (Advaita point of view) "is not tied to any religious dogma or bias" and again it is transcendental to the popular sense of secularism in so far as it "avoids all 'isms' and is associated with a transcendental variety of monism subscribing to the view of non-duality of existence."[3]

Now, because of its freshness and novelty, a discussion seems to be warranted on this interpretation of Advaita concept of value. Certain points as to whether this rendering is quite faithful in exposing the Advaita standpoint are to be noted in this context. Further, how far this formulation itself is reasonably sound has to be considered. And also to what extent this point-of-view is acceptable for national integration must be examined.

If value in Advaita is primarily set for sustaining social justice, harmony and solidarity, then obviously it has a great world-

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ly significance. If the conception of all-pervasiveness of Brahman (*sarvabhūtāntarātmā*) can be viewed as pointing at the equi-distribution of dharmic principle everywhere and its proper comprehension (*avagati*) is the illumination (*puruṣārtha* or *mokṣa*), then of course Advaita is no longer seen to be a metaphysical abstract point of speculation; nor is it the result of dry logic chopping or verbalism; but, on the other hand, it can be viewed as extremely important at the worldly socio-ethical plane. Such Upaniṣadic expressions that Brahman is realised here and now and that it is not that what people worship, are quite significant in emphasising the Advaita tone of secular non-theologism. It is, no doubt, the fact that in certain Advaitic writings there are definite supportive implications and in highlighting such implications there is *prima facie* no danger of misrendering.

But when one tries to connect some such highly significant lines from the socio-ethical point of view with other lines of Vedānta where there is found exclusive emphasis on oneness to the extent of complete avoidance of manyness (*neha nānāsti kiñcana*), difficulty seems to be quite normal. There is clear indication that in the Advaita philosophical scheme the highest value (*niḥśreyasa*) is free from all sense of duality and multiplicity. Here there is no synthesis of unity with diversity. But the sole acceptance of oneness or *ekatva* is maintained all through consistently. Diversity is not reconciled; but it seems to have been just relegated from the front to the back, and a distinct note is given to the idea that *ekatva* alone is valuable and that *nānātva* is valueless. Here by way of referring to some lines of the *Pañcadaśī* it is held that Advaitic illumination does not destroy duality, only the enlightened come to realise that the world of diversity is not real in the sense of the reality of the self or Brahman.[4] Now, even if one accepts this concession, what does it amount to? Does it effectively synthesise the one with the many? Does it not reveal that duality is not real in the sense that oneness is real? In that way the Advaita concept of value seems to be radical rather than liberal. What sort of tolerance can that possibly be which so uncompromisingly rejects the other point of view?

One thing, of course, is acceptable, *viz.*, that Advaita *darśana* is not propagating any religious doctrine. It is clearly a philosophical point of view. It is not a religious cult. This becomes quite evident from the point that in Advaita Brahman as the highest value has cautiously been kept distinct from *Īśvara* which

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is usually the object of worship and prayer. But how, for that matter alone, does it become a secular value? A word of explanation is advanced in this regard. It is said that it is not secular in the popular sense as it avoids all 'isms'. Hence it is termed transcendental. But what plausibility can there be in such an explanation when it is said that it is that which is transcendental to something, say X? Does not transcendental or beyond something turn out to be obscure and vague? And in what sense is it beyond all 'isms' when it itself is designated as transcendental secularism? An attempt has been made to explain the expression "transcendental secularism" in terms of transcendental monism and that too again in terms of non-duality of existence. Well, what is the clarification achieved thereby? Does this not reveal a mark of abstract vagueness? It is not clear as to what precise meaning is obtained when the Advaita concept of value is depicted as transcendentally secular. If secularism is not here exactly in any of the available socio-ethical plane, but in a peculiar abstract transpopular metaphysical sense of implying non-duality of existence, then that is surely vague and cannot cater to the need of invigorating the cause of national integration.

More penetrating investigation is perhaps required for arriving at a meeting point between the Advaita concept of value and that of national integration. It is perhaps well acceptable that *dharma* in this tradition has definitely a sanctioned use which is never opposed, but rather is conducive for inculcating an ethical idea that is well designed to keep a balance between individual expectation and social need. *Dharma*, in this sense, has of course a clear secular leaning. It is obviously ethical rather than theological. This conception of *dharma* seems to have a philosophical support in the Advaita explanation of the concept of *mokṣa* which is meant as being enlightened about the highest value in the human plane (*puruṣārtha*). From this point of view Advaita is definitely secular in the usual socio-ethical sense. It thereby strives to point out how an Advaitin is to develop an attitude towards everything on the basis of dispassionate balanced reason (*sama-buddhi*). *Ekatva* is emphasised here not necessarily in the sense of eradicating *dvaita*. But it is perhaps only meant to point to the significance of the idea of oneness, universality, etc. amidst multiplicity. Thus the concept of value as *mokṣa* or *puruṣārtha* seems to have a profound importance and in that way it is secular and not sacred. Perhaps, in this sense, it is a form of humanita-

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rian secularism (as I would prefer to describe it) which is never opposed to the idea of national integration, but does supply at least an indirect boosting for it.

NOTES

1. Here special mention may be made to two moderen writers, Pandit Nilakantha Das (Vide his book; *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (in Oriya), third edition, New Students Store, Cuttack-2, 1968) and Dr. Ganeswar Misra (Vide his book: *Vaidika Dharma Cetanā: Eka Dārshanika Vicāra* (in Oriya), Santosh Publications, Cuttack, 1985).
2. G.C. Nayak, *Philosophical Reflections*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1987, pp. 66-68.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

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35

ŚAṄKARA — THE INTEGRATOR OF INDIAN CULTURE

S. O. RAMAKRISHNAN

1. A Naive Definition of Culture

Even though the term 'culture' has different connotations, in the present context it can be defined as a way of life of a people crystallised through generations, a "cumulative effect of inherited tradition."[1]

2. Culture Redefined — A Valuational Perspective

But, when culture is viewed from the valuational angle, it can be defined, in the words of K. M. Munshi, "as the characteristic way of life inspired by certain fundamental values in which a people live. It is the sum-total of values expressed through art, religion, literature, social institutions and behaviour, the overt (external) acts of individuals and mass action inspired by collective urges."[2] K. Satchidananda Murty, elucidating this definition of culture, remarks that "every culture is an attempt (conscious as well as unconscious) to conjointly realise in social life certain fundamental values, and at its highest point of development, it attains to some extent a specific type of excellence and upholds a more or less definite ideal of life."[3]

3. Indian Culture — A "Living" Example of a "Living Culture"

Judging from the standards set for a 'living culture', *viz.*, continuity and a common outlook of life among the people, it can be reasonably concluded that Indian culture, in addition to being a living culture, is possibly the oldest, surviving culture in the world by virtue of its antiquity and its remarkably acceptive, accommodative and assimilative capacities to imbibe the best and leave the unwanted from its challengers, eventually to stand only enriched and enlivened. This has become possible because of its adherence to the basic value which is at once long-standing, permanent and

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eternal, as this value rests on the recognition of the basic, everlasting, spiritual element underlying all creation, which clearly reveals that the basic value which the Indian culture has been cherishing all these years has been 'spiritual'.

4. Indian Culture through the Ages — Its Destabilising Factors and Stabilisers

The Indian culture, over the long years of its existence, should have been subject to various kinds of influences from various quarters. But whenever there were de-stabilising forces, there appeared on the Indian soil stabilisers who were "not kings and emperors, nor distinguished statesmen, valiant warriors or merchants but messengers of spirit who appealed to the fundamental unity of all in the basic reality which is spiritual and a comprehensiveness of outlook which knows no narrow distinctions."[4]

Spiritual value, in its wake, brings with it the "three A-s", *viz.*, acceptance, accommodation and assimilation and the resultant "three R-s", *viz.*, re-interpretation, re-orientation, and rejuvenation. That being so, these messengers of spirit enabling Indian culture to arm itself with these "three A-s" and the "three R-s" saw to it that Indian culture rode high through the ravages of time, crossing in the process many a hurdle and overcoming many an obstacle, integrated the diverse elements, and earned the name of living culture. In this connection, for the sake of convenience taking into consideration the "de-stabilising" forces, the "stabilisers" and their periods, the long history of Indian culture, from the ancient to the contemporary, is divided into four phases.

The Four-phases

Phase	*Period*	*De-stabilising Forces*	*Stabilisers*
I	Ancient	Buddhism, Jainism and Internal Excrescences	Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and others
II	Mediaeval	Turks, Afghans, Mughals and others	Guru Nanak and others
III	Modern	Christianity, Western Culture, Science and Technology	Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda, Swami Vivekananda and others
IV	Contemporary	Western Culture particularly American, cumulative achievements of Science and Technology	Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Paramacārya of Kanchi, and others

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It should be noted that these "four phases" are not 'water-tight' compartments. One phase issues out from the other, as in a telescope. That is why, they are complementary to one another and are inseparable. In contemporary parlance, they may be described as "four-in-one."

5. The First Phase of Challenge : The De-stabilising Forces External and Internal[5]

Here, 'external' and 'internal' are spoken of with reference to the 'acceptance' or 'non-acceptance' of the authority of the *Vedas*. Buddhism and Jainism are termed 'external' because of their 'non-acceptance' of the Vedic authority, while the Pūrva-mīmāṁsaka heralding the importance of the rituals, and the other forms of worship extolling the supremacy of the different gods of the Vedic pantheon such as Gaṇapati, Kumāra, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya and Viṣṇu (respectively called Gāṇāpatyam, Kaumāram, Śaivam, Śāktam, Sauram and Vaiṣṇavam), working well within the framework of the Vedic authority, but indirectly contributing to the 'de-stabilisation' of the Vedic culture because of their feuds, are called 'internal.'

6. The Challenge Met: The Advent of Ādi Śaṅkara

Now, the ball was in the court of Indian culture. It had to play the ball, *i.e.*, meet the challenge, not by totally demolishing and destroying the forces of influence, but by accepting, accommodating, and assimilating the good and leaving the bad in them. And this necessitated the ushering a new philosophy which would, while setting at naught the negative elements and retaining the positive ones, reconcile the various rival views and forms of worship by bringing them under one roof. Such a philosophy was introduced by Śaṅkara in the name of 'non-dualism' (*advaita*). With his philosophy of 'non-dualism' (*advaita*), Śaṅkara could bring the much needed and the much sought after integration that Indian culture needed at that time on a most rational footing at the religious, social and political levels.

Even though more than one opinion has been expressed in regard to the date of Śaṅkara, some fixing it prior and others posterior to the advent of Jesus Christ,[6] it is agreed by all that the Great Master lived only for 32 years, out of which the first eight years were spent in his home town with his mother in Kerala, the southernmost part of India, the next eight years in studying the various Vedāntic scriptures such as the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā* under self-realised preceptors, and the

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last sixteen years in expounding, propagating and establishing the philosophy of non-dualism. He was a "preceptor par excellence" by virtue of his ability not only to put across his ideas to different kinds of people possessing different kinds of temperaments, even to the most dull-witted, but also to integrate what he taught with his life-style, a "humanist" and an "idealist" not of an 'ivory-tower' 'dreaming' type but one who combined in himself the zeal to be a 'practical visionary.'

At a time when there was absolutely no means of travel available, Śaṅkara could move throughout the length and breadth of the country, establish monasteries for the propagation of the philosophy of Advaita at important centres, chief among them being those in Dvaraka in the West, Puri in the East, Badrinath in the North and Sringeri and Kanchi in the South and bring out at the same time not only commentaries on the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahma-sūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, known for their remoreseless logical subtlety and reasoning, but also devotional songs and hymns in praise of the various personal gods of the Vedic pantheon, to satisfy the emotional needs of the people, mainly with a view to integrating and fusing the diverse elements of Indian culture. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru admiringly observes that Śaṅkara "in a brief life of thirty-two years did the work of many long lives."[7]

That Śaṅkara has been able to achieve so much in so short a span of life and that too at such an antiquated time speaks volumes for the abundant spiritual energy that this young lad must have had, which only goes to establish that man, if only he 'wills' can accomplish anything in his lifetime, irrespective of his life-span; for, man after all is essentially none other than, and non-different from, the eternal, unlimited, infinite reality, a basic principle of the philosophy of Śaṅkara. The philosophy of Śaṅkara can be summarised as follows. (1) The reality that underlies the individual self, *viz.*, man, is non-different from the reality that underlies the world. (2) That being so, the reality is non-dual or secondless. To use a positive expression, the reality is only without a second. (3) The *summum bonum* of man should be not only to have an intellectual comprehension of one's true nature as essentially non-different from the reality and hence with all creation (*tattva-jñāna*), but also to realise it in one's lifetime (*tattva-darśana*) and bring it within the framework of one's activities.

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7. The Philosophical Implications and Corollaries of Self-realisation

Humanism is the philosophical implication of self-realisation as advocated by Śaṅkara. It views man as the centre and starting point of all activities, proclaiming the essential non-difference of man with reality and consequently affirming the basic non-difference of man with all that exists. But this humanism has to be termed not theo-centric, but self (*ātman*) - centric. The corollaries that follow from the self-centric humanism of Śaṅkara can be summarised as follows. (1) There is a basic reality underlying everything. (2) Man, not a mere organism, but a person, a spiritual being, is capable of infinite potentialities. (3) There can be no essential difference between the various religions and cults. (4) There can be no essential difference among men. (5) There can be no difference fundamentally between man and the other forms of creation. (6) Man alone, as the meeting point of the finite and the infinite, is capable of the awareness of his essential non-difference with reality. (7) Man can and should, in this very life, develop the awareness in regard to his true nature, re-structurise his personality accordingly, aim at self-realisation, realise his essential nature as being non-different from reality and as a result feel kinship not only with himself but also with the entire creation.

8. Śaṅkara's Contribution to Indian Culture

It is here that Śaṅkara takes on the role of an invigorative integrator. He attempted at 'stabilising' and 'integrating' the then Indian culture first by integrating theory and practice in his personal life. To him, 'national integration' was not a mere empty slogan, but his life-breath. Towards achieving this Śaṅkara insisted on an absolute integration of thought, word and deed. Any culture, if it should survive, should necessarily possess this characteristic. And Śaṅkara achieved this twin-integration, *viz.*, national integration through integration between theory and practice by his personal example.

Not only did he cross the ocean of transmigratory existence but also helped others in accomplishing this task. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, eulogising this attitude of Śaṅkara, observes: "Śaṅkara was no escapist retiring into his shell or into a corner of the forest, seeking his own individual perfection and oblivious of what happened to others ... He was intensely conscious of his mission, who looked upon the whole of India from Cape Comorin to Himalayas as the field of his action and as something that held together

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culturally and was infused by the same spirit."[8] Towards achieving this objective, he moved throughout the length and breadth of the country, from the North to the South, from the East to the West, by establishing monastic orders in the different parts of the country, and kindled an awareness, in the minds of the people of India, of "common land and common culture,"[9] by speaking to the different types of people from different planes, intellectual, philosophical, religious and popular.[10]

Secondly, Śaṅkara integrated Buddhism and Jainism into the Vedic fold. The flexibility and elasticity of Śaṅkara's mind and his spirit of genuine tolerance made him accommodate and assimilate many of the Buddhistic tenets into his fold. He seemed to have appreciated the Buddhist viewpoint that a 'faith' should be free from all superstitions, if it should be healthy, clean and strong. That was why he, primarily taking sanction from the *Upaniṣads*, insisted that 'faith' should be followed by 'reason' (*yukti*) or in other words, "reasoned faith",[11] as Radhakrishnan would choose to call it, and vouchsafed by the touchstone of experience (*anubhava*). With this frame of mind, he could by a "fraternal embrace"[12] incorporate the concepts of mysticism, assimilate many Buddhist practices, condemn 'animal sacrifice' and was even attributed, by many scholars, to have accommodated some of the important philosophical concepts of Buddhism. In short, Śaṅkara attempted at integrating the Buddhist penchant for free thought with a traditional grounding. In fact, Swami Ranganathananda goes to the extent of even opining that "If Buddha's teachings are to be provided with a metaphysical support, we have to search for it in Śaṅkara's Advaita."[13] In this connection he remarks: "If Buddhism had continued in the spirit in which Buddha had meant it to proceed, if it had not indulged in metaphysical speculation, but propagated only the four Noble Truths and the eight-fold path, Śaṅkara need not have appeared. But when against the exhortations of the master and without his guidance, metaphysical attempts to 'complete the circle' miscarried, resulting in intellectual confusion and spiritual anarchy, Śaṅkara appeared and gave humanity the priceless thought of Advaita."[14] However, in regard to the ethical aspect, *viz.*, the four-fold Noble Truths and the eight-fold path of Buddhism and the 'Tri-Ratna' of Jainism, Śaṅkara did not appear to have had any difficulty in accommodating and assimilating them in his system as he could achieve this by way of prescribing them as the essential

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qualifications for the student of Vedānta.

Thirdly, he integrated the six kinds of faith prevalent at that time by means of his philosopny of 'nondualism' of Reality. The six kinds of faith related to the worship of Gaṇapati (Gāṇāpatyam), Kumāra (Kaumāram), Śiva (Śaivam), Śakti (Śāktam), Viṣṇu (Vaiṣṇavam) and Sūrya (Sauram). For achieving this integration he established a "pūjā-system" called the "*pañcāyatana-pūjā*", which is observed in many Indian homes even to this day. In this method of worship, the different Gods such as Gaṇapati, Kumāra, Śiva, Śakti, Viṣṇu and Sūrya are worshipped in the same altar in different pieces of stones acquired from different parts of India. By means of the establishment of this type of worship of different Gods in the same altar, Śaṅkara could infuse a sense of unity among the people of India and integrate the nation at the worship-altar (pūjā-room) of every house.

His Holiness Śrī Candraśekharendra Sarasvatī, the Paramācāyar of Kanchi, describes the catholicity involved in this mode of worship established by Śaṅkara, and its significance in the following words: "In this Pañcāyatana scheme, Śiva is worshipped in Bāṇa Liṅga, which is found in plenty in the Omkarakunda of the river Narmadā (central India). Viṣṇu is worshipped in the Śālagrāma, which can be had in the Gandaki river in the Himalayas. Crystals in which Sūrya is worshipped are found in Vallam in Tamil Nadu. The Svarṇamukhi stone representing the Divine Mother (Śakti) is found in the bed of the river of that name *viz.*, Svarṇamukhī in Andhra. The river Śoṇā flowing into the Gaṅgā abounds in the red śoṇabhadra stones representing Gaṇapati. It is but meet that, in addition to these, Kumāra is also included in the Pañcāyatana as He is the presiding Deity of the one remaining faith of Ṣaṇ-matas."[15]

Another redeeming feature of this type of worship is that the different stones, through which the different Gods are worshipped, do not have the usual form normally associated with that God. For example, the stone which represents Gaṇapati is not like the usual form of Gaṇapati with a trunk, tusk, long ears, etc. So too, with the other Gods. Though these stones representing the different Gods do not possess a particular form, *i.e.* they are formless, they are worshipped with the help of a form only, to show that the reality of God, *per se*, though formless, and nameless, has to be realised only through a form and a name. This is a kind of "formless-form" worship, innovated by Śaṅkara, which,

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according to the Paramācārya of Kanchi is the intermediary stage between the formless and that which has the form. In the words of the Paramācārya of Kanchi:

> Though even the layman in India knows the beautiful personal marks of each of these divinities, in the Pañcāyatana, the divinities are not usually worshipped in those forms, but are worshipped in symbols. As though taking the mind of the devotee from the form to the formless, while at the sametime giving full scope to his devotional feelings, certain symbols are worshipped in place of the *mūrtis*. This is an intermediary stage between form and formless — because the symbols are certain kinds of rockous formations and therefore have a form; yet they are formless in that they have no parts like face, eyes, body, hands, feet, etc.

The significance of this method of worship is: "The forms may appear different, the names may be different, but the truth is one. So, a house having this Pañcāyatana, with stones from the different parts of India, is as though having the whole national consciousness frozen in it."[16] It was for having re-established and integrated the six forms of the worship on the basis of his philosophy of non-dualism that Śaṅkara was honoured with the adjective *ṣaṇmata-pratiṣṭhāpaka* in addition to *advaita-sthāpaka*.[17]

Fourthly, Śaṅkara integrated men at the social level by restructurising the social order. In addition to promoting national integration by means of religion Śaṅkara also attempted at national integration at the social level by restructurising the social order, by recognising the basic equality and dignity of individuals, not by mere precept but also by practice. This, he could accomplish by: (a) his extensive travel covering North, South, East and West, especially at a time when no means of transport was available; (b) opening his "philosophic sanctuary,"[18] to borrow the phrase from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, to everyone who was capable of entering it; (sc even accepting a 'dull-witted' boy as his disciple, making him intellectually great and consecrating him as head of one of the monastic orders; (d) proclaiming his acceptance of even *caṇḍāla* (a low-caste man) as his *guru*, recognising his self-realisation; and (e) his rushing to the side of his mother and performing the last rites to her on her death, defying orthodoxy and extolling the greatness of 'motherhood'. This action of Śaṅkara speaks volumes for the fire of revolution that was burning

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in him for social reform, but within the framework of the *Vedas*.

In this restructurisation of the social order, one could notice that Śaṅkara "destroyed the old dogmas not by violently attacking them but by quietly suggesting something more reasonable which was at the same time more spiritual too,"[19] by suggesting a philosophy of non-dualism of Spirit or Reality, which recognised the basic non-difference of man with reality, which on that basis proclaimed the basic equality and dignity of individuals in a society and which he translated into action every moment of his life. Very rightly, then, he was described as "a social idealist on the grand scale."[20]

It was against this background of the essential non-difference of man with all the other forms of creation that Śaṅkara sang the sonnet of 'universality'. In the hymn addressed to the Goddess Annapūrṇā, he proclaimed that his

Mother was Pārvatī
Father was Maheśvara (Śiva)
Kinsmen were Śiva-bhaktas, and
(His) world were the three worlds.

In this verse, Śaṅkara, by referring to the 'whole world' as his family (*vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*) goes beyond the merely national to embrace the whole of humanity in its sweeping, all-encompassing and all-embracing vision of kinship and oneness giving thereby his philosophy a 'global orientation' which prompts us to crown him with the title 'super socialist.'

Fifthly, Śaṅkara integrated the political kingdoms. It is now clear that this social temper of Śaṅkara, heralding the unity and equality of the entire creation, has its basis in spirituality. Undoubtedly, the unity and integration that Śaṅkara forged among the fiftynine kingdoms[21] of his times should have been quite strong and stable, which earned him the name "a political genius."[22]

Sixthly, Śaṅkara achieved integration on the solid foundation of love by providing a rational explanation of love. "Love thy neighbour as thyself" is usually suggested as the watchword for the accomplishment of integration. Now the question that remains to be answered is: How can and why should I love my neighbour as myself when he is totally different from me physically, mentally, intellectually, socially, and otherwise. According to Śaṅkara, the answer to this question is contained in the question itself. He would answer after the *Upaniṣads*: "Because he is myself". The same self or reality that resides in me inheres in him also. In

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this sense, he is essentially non-different from me and hence deserves love, respect, reverence, etc. In the words of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, "Verily, a husband is not dear that you may love the husband; but that you may love the self, therefore a husband is dear. Verily, a wife is not dear that you may love the wife, but that you may love the self, therefore a wife is dear."[23] That means, a husband, or wife, or for that matter anybody, is loved not for what is merely phenomenal in him or her, for his or her goodness, or beauty, or wealth, or strength, or kindness, but for the sake of the self.[24]

Applying this logic underlying his concept of love to the entire creation, Śaṅkara said that all of them are loved "not for themselves as they appear but for the sake of the self in them, for that eternal self, for the universal self in which we all share, in which we all live and move and have our being[25] integrating integration in the process, with the philosophy of love and providing integration with a rational basis. Actually, it was only by the employment of the philosophy of love, rooted in the philosophy of essential non-difference of all creation, that Śaṅkara could furnish a rational, stable and solid foundation for such values as tolerance, mutual respect, acceptance, etc. forge the much-needed integration in human relations on that basis, and make them relevant for posterity too.

9. The Relevance of the Philosophy of Śaṅkara to Contemporary Indian Culture

Indian Culture at present is facing the threat of "disintegration" at all levels, social, political and religious. Even the very personality of the youth, the torch bearers of Indian culture, is in jeopardy and is in the process of disintegration. Under the circumstances, the fear is very reasonably entertained whether the Indian Culture will stand the the test of this "disintegration."

If the past 'perpetual self-renewals'[26] are any indications of the future possibilities, then Indian culture should survive this challenge, provided it subjects itself to re-adjustment, re-assessment, re-interpretation and re-orientation of its basic components, *viz.*, the values, as in the past, in terms of the spirit or the self, highlighting the essential non-difference of all creation, and its necessary corollary, the self-centric humanism, as suggested by Śaṅkara. According to Śaṅkara, this alone will ensure lasting unity and integration because the spirit or the self on which it is based is eternal. Russell also on the lines of Śaṅkara opines that

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"by means of a political and economic unification, an external harmony of man with man can be established, but it will not be a stable harmony until men have achieved a genuine harmony within themselves."[27]

There are quite a few advantages in this line of interpretation. (a) It provides the necessaary basis, impetus, significance and sustenance for all other human values. (b) It opens up a new vista of infinite potentialities for individuals, which should be only properly tapped and harnessed. (c) It suggests that the finiteness and limitations to which man and the universe are subject are only apparent and hence the barriers created by men, among themselves, on the basis of caste, colour, creed, race, sex, and religion, which are only superficial, should be transcended. (d) It suggests the underlying unity of all religions, which, when properly understood and practised, will set at naught the rivalries among the various religions.

The only way to achieve this objective by inducing an awareness in the minds of everyone for the recognition of (a) a basic, spiritual element underlying all creation, (b) the non-dualism of reality (c) the basic non-difference of man with reality, (d) his capability for infinite potentiality, (e) the need to unearth and harness this potentiality for constructive purposes; for building an integrated India, and above all, (f) the necessity to translate this theoretical knowledge into practical action, integrating thought, word and deed.

Education is the only means for effecting this inducement for which restructurisation of the educational pattern, integrating this essential aspect of Indian culture with everyone of the disciplines taught in the curriculam, is a must. Lacking this basic awareness and the commitment to integrate thought, word and deed, we will be like the person proclaiming and repeating "I am the emperor" without eliminating his enemies and without bringing the entire land of his kingdom under his sway. So remarks Śaṅkara humorously.

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36

ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA AS A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZER

HIMANSU CHAKRAVARTI

Political stability is perhaps an essential condition for the maintenance of national integrity. The sentiment of national integration is also an indispensable condition for the upkeep of political freedom and stability. This ancient land of Bharata has gone through the various troubles and turmoils. Sometimes we have been heroes of many victories, and sometimes again our men and military have been vanquished by our adversaries. Leaving aside the prehistoric and the Vedic periods of our traditional strength and wisdom, we may easily recall the glorious periods of the *Mahābhārata* scions — Yudhiṣṭhira, Duryodhana, Parīkṣit, the Mauryas, the early Guptas, the House of Puṣyabhūti when substantial parts of India came under the banner of one king and emperor whose dictates were followed and obeyed by the people at large.

Without entering into the problem of the date of the advent of Śaṅkarācārya we may, for our present discussion, accept 788 A.D. as his year of birth. Harṣa was a very powerful king and at the same time very popular and charitable. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese Master of the Law, travelled India during the reign of Harṣa who held two grand assemblies in 643 A.D. in the presence of the Chinese pilgrim — one in Kanauj and the second in Prayāga (Allahabad). The quinquennial assemby known as the Mahāmokṣapariṣad is described by Hiuen Tsang in detail, because one such was held in 643 A.D. in his presence. "The gathering at Prayāga included about 500,000 people who had been summoned from the distant corners of the Five Indies to receive gifts from the emperor. Harṣa went to the spot accompanied by the Chinese Master of the Law and the kings of twenty countries. Images of the Buddha, Ādityadeva (the sun) and Īśvaradeva (Śiva) were installed on successive days, and precious articles were distribut-

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ed in charity on each occasion."[1] The fact that followed touches the heart of every man and woman. "When the accumulation of five years was exhausted, the emperor wore a second-hand garment and paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions."[2] In view of these facts it may safely be concluded that he was undoubtedly one of the greatest kings of ancient India. It is unfortunate that he died in 646 or 647 A.D., and his reign continued only for 40 years (606 to 646).

There was almost a void after Harṣa in the political field. As usual all sorts of evil began to appear and soon came a period of trouble, struggle and disunity which could be removed by a strong king. The political and social conditions during this period have been described by H.C. Raychaudhuri as follows: "The removal of his (Harṣa) strong personality let loose forces of disintegration and disorder in the Madhya-deśa (Upper Ganges Valley) that were not successfully overcome till about A.D. 836 when Bhoja I of the Pratihāra family ruled once more over a vast empire, with its capital at Mahodaya or Kanauj."[3] The state of misrule, strife, self-seeking, etc. continued for about two centuries. "The history of the Upper Ganges Valley from the end of 646 to 836 is one of internal strife and of external invasion which ended when the royal throne of Harṣa passed into the hands of the Pratihāras."[4]

Discipline and honesty suffer much when the administration becomes weak for some reason or the other, especially instability in the royal house. Self-seeking and narrow parochial outlook become rampant at such moments. Ideals of life are mostly lost under such circumstances. In ancient India the religious sentiment was a tremendous force, although religion was not only a belief, but it also included the way of life and the philosophical thoughts that could explain the entire individualistic nature and existence. Till today the Hindus are influenced to a great extent by this ancient heritage. The concept of nationhood also was dependent on religion, rather *dharma*.

During this critical period of about two centuries unfortunately no religious leader of wide following could bring in the enthusiasm of the people so as to make the disintegrated people integrated as a nation, although the seed of national unity was present in them. Further, the ancient Vedic religion was being practised by almost all. Even if some were not seeing eye to eye with that tradition, they were not vocal, and at least such persons

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could not rise as a force against the main current. The slaughter of animals for the purpose of sacrifice pained many kind-hearted and thoughtful persons who could offer a formidable opposition under the leadership of a rebellious but glorious child of the soil, *viz.*, Buddha. The discordant note against the cruel sacrificial process can easily be traced in the scriptures and philosophical treatises as a feeble voice of the opponents (*pūrvapakṣa*). This feeling of pain and sympathy found a vociferous expression in the voice of Buddha. The patronisation of kings especially of Aśoka made this religious-cum-philosophical doctrine widely acceptable. The rock-edicts and other methods of communication supplied momentum in this move of non-violence.

Harṣa was a descendant of Puṣyabhūti, a devoted worshipper of Śiva. Although he belonged to the traditional Vedic form of worship, "he gave a great impetus to Buddhism by prohibiting the use of animal food, erecting thousands of topes on the banks of the Ganges and Buddhist monasteries at the sacred place of the Buddhists. Once a year he summoned all the Buddhist monks together, and for twenty-one days supplied them with regulation requisites. He furnished the chapels and liberally adorned the common halls of the monasteries."[5] Thus in the hands of the powerful king Harṣa there was a total harmony of the traditional followers of the Vedic religion and the Buddhists. But with the demise of Harṣa the religio-philosophical tension of the Sanātanists and Buddhists came to a head. Not only that, in the absence of a powerful and philanthropic ruler the various fissiparous tendencies rose to such an extent that the communal feelings brought a sort of cleavage, though not as serious as the crusade of the European countries.

At this critical juncture appeared Śaṅkara who made a synthesis of all the religious doctrines prevalent in the then India. His principle of synthesis was so scientific, logically sound and broad-based that the same principle may be applied for settling all disputes, not to speak of the religious ones, even today. In his philosophical doctrine of Advaita Vedānta there was no scope for sectarian wranglings and bickerings, since in this system none of the forms is real. The Real remains behind these unreal forms, and a conscientious person should always remain in search of that Reality which has no form, no colour, no odour, no touch, no length, no breadth, etc. The accepted means of cognition, *viz.*, perception, inference, etc. fail to cognize that supreme Reality,

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viz., Brahman. That supreme entity may be realised at heart because our very existence is non-different from that supreme Reality. The only impediment is ignorance which veils the Reality. Efficient and enlightened teachers teach their efficient and advanced students by an uncommon method of transmitting his (the teacher's) realisation into his disciple. We find in Śaṅkara's *Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotra* (12):

citraṃ vaṭatarormūle vṛddhāḥ śiṣyā gururyuvā
gurostu maunaṃ vyākhyānaṃ śiṣyāstu chinnasaṃśayāḥ.

It isstrange that under a banyan tree there is a *guru* who is young in age and there are senior disciples sitting at his feet. They are understanding the silent exposition and their doubts are removed.

In order to bring all the sects together Śaṅkara nicely unfolded the truth which was falling gradually into oblivion. It is only ignorance that makes the difference in sects and modes of worship. This paves unnecessarily the way to quarrel and destruction. A wise man (*muni*) should remain free from these evil tendencies. In order to attain this stage proper training from a revealed soul is necessary. To quote the *Jīvanmuktānandalaharī*, (11):

kvacic chaivaiḥ sārdhaṃ kvacidapi śāktaiḥ saha raman
kadā viṣṇor bhaktaiḥ kvacid api sauraiḥ saha raman
kadā vā gāṇeśair gatasakalabhedo 'dvayatayā
munir na vyāmohaṃ bhajati gurudīkṣākṣatatamāḥ.

Thus Śaṅkara saved the country from sectarian quarrels by his solid arguments.

Śaṅkara criticised vehemently the Buddhist theory of flux inasmuch as in this doctrine nothing remains in this world. If nothing be permanent, how can this flux be determined? All the things being destroyed in the second moment of their birth, there will be no entity which can verify and prove the transitoriness of the things. The theory of nihilism (*śūnyavāda*) also suffers from a similar defect of not being proved. If there be anything or anybody capable of proving the nihility, that particular proof itself will be an exception to the rule of universal nihility and will render the proposition of universal nihility an impossibility. Śaṅkara accepted the Buddhist theory of the supremacy of knowledge over the objects. The idealistic theory of the Vijñānavādin was more or less accepted with the modification of the continuity of knowledge and/or Self. Śaṅkara fully appreciated the Buddhist attitude towards renunciation, and wrote the *Kaupīnapañcaka* where the famous refrain '*kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*' occurs.

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Thus the inherent integrity of the people is maintained.

It is often argued that the big monasteries of the Buddhists offered training, moral and spiritual. But these people were not politically conscious and there was the dearth of military concentration as a result of which the country became weak. If everything becomes momentary (*kṣaṇika*) and a source of misery (*duḥkha*), how can a follower of the said doctrine be careful about his territory? Śaṅkara made a vehement attack against such a doctrine, and admitted one permanent Entity that is of the nature of existence (*sat*), knowledge (*cit*) and bliss (*ānanda*). This is not inimical to anything or anybody. Thus there remains a common ground on which every philosophical system can meet and converge. This ideal of Śaṅkara befriended even the Buddhists who, by virtue of the natural law of competition and contest, had to find place in the far east without any sort of enmity with the land of its emergence, *i.e.*, India. In this twentieth century also on all occasions of trouble elsewhere Buddhists sought refuge in India. The revered Dalai Lama and his men came to India when they felt insecure in Tibet. At present also when Bangladesh is declared as a Muslim country, Chakmas of Chittagong sought their safety in India, along with the innumerable Hindus coming every now and then.

Although the original concept of caste in Hindu society was based on the theory of division of labour, it was slowly transformed into a sort of barrier resulting in ill-feeling, untouchability and hatred. It is a sad commentary of events coming up from the stagnant society which failed to provide any guidance through some able leadership, religious or political. When weak persons fail to come out of the whirlpools of trouble, they make weaker sections their scapegoats. The curse of casteism thus made its way in the Hindu society. Strong persons of all ages have denounced it and many of them succeeded in having this evil abolished during their presence. Śaṅkara said that only real knowledge could make a person great and respected as a preceptor, be that person a hybrid caste as Cāṇḍāla or a Brahmin. In one famous quintet entitled *Manīṣāpañcaka* (verses 1 & 2) he mentioned this twice as a refrain:

cāṇḍālo'stu sa tu dvijo'stu gururityeṣā manīṣā mama.

The excellence of Śaṅkara lies in the fact that the doctrine which he preached was not his own, but it was derived from the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. For explaining his views he always de-

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pended on these texts, the *Gītā* and the *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa, and almost on each occasion he quoted the lines from these scriptures. The Sanātanists were very happy to note that all such views were based on our ancient *śāstras*, and thus they did not demur to follow Śaṅkara's views. Another key to Śaṅkara's success in leading the people in general was his devotional mood. It is no denying the fact that the path of knowledge is difficult, and that very rarely a man can be persuaded to follow this through the academic discipline. But devotion is a sentiment which everybody can adopt as his own. The so-called antagonism of the *bhakti* cult against followers of knowledge and *vice versa* was to a great extent put to an end by Śaṅkara. When Śaṅkara composed beautiful devotional poems, those were immediately recited by the innumerable persons who were almost universally enraptured by the content and the melody. From one end of the country to the other the same poems were being recited devotionally which created an atmosphere of oneness among the people. This phenomenon roused the sentiment already in the people and contributed to the national and cultural unity through language and religious affinity. Śaṅkara, an apostle of knowledge, showed by his life and activity that the mutual opposition of knowledge and devotion could, in certain stages at least, be dispensed with.

A temporary upsurge cannot produce the desired unity and integrity of the country. Accordingly, he established four centres, and divided the whole country into four areas with one monastery at the head of the particular area. A chief was appointed for each centre, and the regulations were so judiciously made by a recluse, as Śaṅkara was, that a modern social worker or reformer would gain many substantial points worth imitating. One *maṭha*-chief should not go to the area of another *maṭha* without the prior permission of the chief of that *maṭha*.[6] The chief should always be on the move in his own area so as to ensure the maintenance of the religious principles by the people in general.[7] Śaṅkara enjoins in his *Maṭhānuśāsana* that only clean, self-restrained, well-versed scholar with a direct knowledge of meditation should be appointed the chief of *maṭha*.[8] He advised the chiefs not to handle money for any purpose other than *dharma*, and the money donated for *dharma* should be spent accordingly without any attachment or greed for it just like the water on a lotus-leaf.[9]

Śaṅkara's catholicity and total freedom from any sort of sectarian prejudice are proved by the dictates regarding monastery-

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codes where through the four *maṭhas* he associated all sects of worship, whether Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva or Śākta. He mentioned the names of *devas*, *devīs*, *ācāryas*, disciples, holy *kṣetras*, *gotras*, ten names, etc. wherefrom the entire society could have a full view of the religious sects, and at the same time feel the inherent unity of these various modes of worship. (The Appendix will show these in details.) The entire cultural background was so nicely enshrined by Śaṅkara in the minds of the people through his original writings, commentaries, devotional poems, strong administrative decisions, incessant contacts with ordinary people and organizational capabilities that people could have an ideal which they could zealously follow. The process of integration had been so deeply ingrained that to this day these centres and their *ācāryas* are exerting a tremendous influence on the general public and even on educated personages and administrators. In the absence of an able political leader and administrator in that period of about one and half centuries (646 to 788 A.D.) Śaṅkara, a religious and philosophical stalwart, effected an integration that was essential for the country and the society. The more we forget Śaṅkara, the greater is the danger of disintegration.

NOTES

1. *An Advanced History of India* by R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raichaudhuri and Kalikinkar Datta, 1963, p. 159.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ancient Indian Education* by Radha Kumud Mookerji, p. 513.
6. *paraspara-vibhāge tu praveśo na kadācana*
   parasparena kartavyā ācāryeṇa vyavasthitiḥ
   (*Maṭhānuśāsana*, verse 6)
7. *Ibid.*, verses 2-4.
8. *Ibid.*, verses 9-10.
9. *Ibid.*, verse 15.

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APPENDIX

An abstract of the information gathered from the four Maṭhāmnāyas

	Śāradāmaṭha	Govardhanamaṭha	Jyotirmaṭha or Śrīmaṭha	Śṛṅgerīmaṭha
1. *Sampradāya*[1]	Kīṭavāra	Bhogavāra	Ānandavāra	Bhūrivāra
2. Title of the recluse[2]	Tīrtha, Āśrama	Vana, Araṇya	Giri, Parvata, Sāgara	Sarasvatī, Bhāratī, Purī
3. *Kṣetra* (holy place)	Dvārakā	Puruṣottama	Badarikāśrama	Rāmeśvara
4. *Deva* (male deity)	Siddheśvara	Jagannātha	Nārāyaṇa	Ādivarāha
5. *Devī* (female deity)	Bhadrakālī	Vimalā	Pūrṇāgirī [3]	Kāmākṣī[4]
6. *Ācārya* (first chief)	Viśvarūpa or Sureśvara	Padmapāda	Toṭaka	Pṛthvīdhara
7. *Tīrtha* (holy water)	Gomatī[5]	Mahodadhi	Alakanandā	Tuṅgabhadrā
8. Brahmacārin (first disciple)	Svarūpa	Prakāśa	Ānanda	Caitanya
9. Veda	Sāman	Ṛk	Atharvan	Yajus

(*continued*)

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10. Mahāvākya (sentence conveying identity)	Tattvamasi	Prajñānam brahma	Ayamātmā brahma	Aham brahmāsmi
11. *Gotra* (family of the first disciple)	Atri	Kaśyapa	Bhṛgu	Bhūrbhuva[6]
12. Regions (included under each maṭha)	Western provinces *viz.* Sindhu, Sauvīra, Saurāṣṭra, Mahārāṣṭra and the intermediate regions.	Eastern provinces *viz.* Gauḍa, Suhma, Pauṇḍra, Lauhitya etc.	Northern provinces, *viz.* Kuru, Kāshmīra, Kamboja, Pāñcāla, etc.	Southern provinces, *viz.* Āndhra, Drāviḍa, Karṇāṭa, Kerala etc.

1. All these names are significant and Śaṅkara has explained these terms etymologically. For the sake of brevity those are not mentioned.

2. There are in all ten names (2+2+3+3) for which the followers of Śaṅkara are known as people belonging to *daśanāmī-sampradāya.*

3. The present author is not aware of the identity of this deity.

4. Kāmākṣī is commonly known as the deity residing in Kāmākṣā hill near Gauhati in eastern India. How can She be the deity of the southern *maṭha*?

5. It is very difficult to understand how Gomatī, a river of northern India, can be associated with the western *maṭha.*

6. It is a rare *gotra.*

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37

INFLUENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA ON HINDU TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE AND SYMBOLISM

M. N. DESHPANDE

The eighth and a part of the following century of the Christian era were influenced by the personality of Śaṅkara (A.D. 788-820).[1] Although his life-span was very brief, he dominated the intellectual and religious world of his times and the centuries that followed like a colossus. *Advaita* was the hallmark of his teaching and according to him the 'unqualified Absolute' can be realised through knowledge and knowledge alone, *karma* and *upāsanā* being subsidiary. His commentaries on the *Vedānta-sūtras*, the principal *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavadgītā* and original works such as the *Upadeśasāhasrī* and the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* and many poems, hymns and prayers mark him as one of the greatest interpreters of Vedānta. It will not be gainsaying the fact that Śaṅkara took the contemporary philosophical world by storm by his penetrative wisdom and rhetoric. He went on converting teacher after teacher to his point of view, like a *Cakravartin* subduing one ruler after another.

As an archaeologist and art-historian and one interested in religious and philosophical movements, I began to scan the Indian monumental landscape in order to discover and identify the edifices of the eighth and ninth centuries which could perhaps bear the impress of Śaṅkara's philosophy. While studying the symbolism of the great Rashtrakuta monolith — the Kailāsa temple at Ellora,[2] I felt that I had the first glimpse of the impact of Śaṅkara's philosophy of Advaita (monism) on this great temple. In this endeavour, the first ray of light came from a couplet by Jñāneśvara, the poet-saint of Maharashtra in his philosophical work *Amṛtānubhava*.[3] The *Amṛtānubhava* is one of the greatest philosophical works in Marathi literature and it describes the nature of '*Advaita-bhakti*' or unitive devotion in a couplet (IX. 43).

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Explaining the nature of *Advaita-bhakti* as expounded by Jñāneśvara, R.D. Ranade, in his work (*Mysticism in Maharashtra*: History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 7, p. 164) states:

> In supreme devotion, therefore, the devotee has nothing but God even for his material for worship. Here it may be said that God worships God with God. And Jñāneśvara does not think this to be impossible: for he tells us that from the same rock are carved the idol of God, the temple and God's attendants, which seem to be different, and are yet one.

This reference to the carving of the rock and fashioning out of it the God (*deva*), his tabernacle (*deula*) and his attendants (*parivāra*) points to the Kailāsa monolith. In the life of Jñāneśvara there is an incident that he travelled from Alandi to Paithan[4] and very likely passed by Ellora and saw the great monolith temple of Śiva and hence the above reference in his work, *Amṛtānubhava*.

Carving out such a monolith was not an isolated effort or limited to one region. At Dhamnar, Mandsaur district, M. P., there is a monolithic temple dedicated to the four-armed manifestation of Viṣṇu called Caturbhuja (*Vide* Plate I). It is in *Nāgara* or Indo-Aryan style prevalent in North India and belongs to almost the same period as that of Kailāsa monolith at Ellora. The third great monument of the same vintage and Vaiṣṇava in character is at Masrur, near Kangra, in Himachal Pradesh (Plate II). This is also assignable to early ninth century and it is surmised by some that only a royal patron could undertake such an ambitious work, perhaps Yaśovarman of Kanauj (eighth century) or some Pratihara king may have got it carved. Undoubtedly it carries forward the tradition of peninsular India typified by the Kailāsa monolith. Contemporary political power game also indicates that it was the Rashtrakuta power which tried to dominate both the northern and southern India. It is well-known that, by the time Rashtrakutas came to power, communication between the north and south was well established and art and architectural traditions and common idioms made themselves felt in both the regions of the sub-continent. There is yet another monolith monument of the eighth century, *viz.*, the Kaulgumalai Śiva temple in Tamilnadu (Plate III). Unfortunately, it is unfinished. But it is well-known for its Dakshinamurti sculpture, an embodiment of the *guru* in the act of imparting knowledge. This subject

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is also repeated in the Kailāsa temple at Ellora. While this parallelism is striking enough, scholars might lift their eye-brows and point out that the carving of such monoliths was first practised at Mahabalipuram in Tamilnadu. These monoliths called *rathas* were of the nature of architectural models copying contemporary monuments built in stone on brick. This early rock-cut activity was started by Mahendravarman (A.D. 610-640), who was a versatile innovator in artistic and architectural activities, and was styled *Vicitracitta*, the curious minded. The *rathas* were not strictly meant for worship and were models of contemporory architectural forms in an enduring material.

I hasten to point out further that although the three monoliths mentioned above were meant for the *saguṇa* worship of the God, they were very special creations combining the ideal of fervent *bhakti* and the absolulistic ideal of Śaṅkara.

Drāviḍa-deśa is traditionally considered to be the region where *bhakti* originated. It is also said that *bhakti* was planted in North India by Ramanand. From the fifth to the ninth centuries many Śaiva saints like Sambandhar, Appar and Sundarar flourished in South India and their devotional outbursts in the forms of hymns constitute one of the most valuable literary treasures of the world. The torch of *bhakti* lighted by these saints in Drāviḍa-deśa shed its light far and wide, and in the eighth century we find it illuminating the heart-land of Deccan; and the great temples of Kailāsa at Ellora built by the Rashtrakuta monarch Krishna I (A.D. 756-775), not only symbolises *bhakti* but is also the most northernly example of Dravidian architecture of that time. Thus, one stream that influenced the great temple is undoubtedly *bhakti*, but the temple, in its monolith character, stands for 'Advaita'. The Baroda copper plate[5] grant issued by Rashtrakuta King Karka in Saka 734 (corresponding to 812-13 A.D.) mentions that the celestials moving in the aerial chariot saw the Śiva temple in the Elāpura mountainside and were wonderstruck and called it a *svayambhu* temple, as if to convey that it is like *Brahman*.

elāpurācalagatādbhutasanniveśaṁ
yadvīkṣya vismitavimānacarāmarendrāḥ
etatsvayambhu śivadhāma na kṛtrime śrī
dṛṣṭe dṛśīti satatam-bahu carcayanti.
bhūyastathāvidhakṛtau vyavasāyahāner-
etanmayā kathamaho kṛtamityakasmāt

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kartāpi yasya khalu vismayamāpa śilpī
tannāma kīrtanamakāryata yena rājñā.

Reverting to the *bhakti* movement in Drāviḍa-deśa, it may be pointed out that the first temple to Kailāsapati Śiva built in Tamilnadu was the outcome of the intense devotion of the Saint Appar (A.D. 610-691). Appar is said to have undertaken a very long journey on foot from his native Tamil land to Himalayas, visiting holy places on the way, singing in praise of Lord Śiva. He is credited to have visited no less than one hundred and twenty-five shrines of Lord Śiva, scattered over a long territory in Tamilnadu and north Karnataka. His desire to visit Kailāsa, the grand abode of Śiva, was so intense that, in his strenuous journey in the snowy mountain, he lost his legs due to extreme cold and frost and yet struggled to move forward crawling on his hands and feet. Sekkizhar, the hagiographer of the saints of Tamilnadu, in his work *Periya-purāṇam* describes at length the journery of Appar to Varanasi and beyond to the Himalayas. It is mentioned in the great work that during his arduous journey he met Lord Śiva who came in the guise of a *ṛṣi* and commanded Appar, in a loud holy voice, issuing out of the sky: "Dive in this pond and see us in Thiruvaiyaru of unblemished glory just exactly in the same state as we are seated in Kailāsa." Appar heard this command and had the beatific vision of Śiva and Pārvatī and returned to Thiruvaiyaru (in Thanjavur district). To commemorate this great miracle a great temple was built here, known as '*Ten Kailāsam*' or *Dakṣiṇa Kailāsa*. This was later rebuilt in stone by a Chola king. A second Kailāsanāth temple was built at Kancipuram by Rajasimha (*circa* A.D. 700-28). Both these temples thus stand for *bhakti* ideal of the Tamil saints.

The Kailāsa temple at Ellora is rock-cut and monolithic in character in contradistinction with the two masonary temples mentioned above. It was scooped out from the rock-mass of the mountain range at Ellora, the chiselling of the outer mass portion by portion was tantamount to the progressive removal of ignorance (*avidyā*) and the emergence of the temple as the unfolding of the original nature of Brahman which is knowledge incarnate. The Kailāsa temple is thus creation symbolising '*Advaita-bhakti*'. The use of the term *Advaita-bhakti* may appear to be a contradiction in terms. B. R. Kulkarni in his work, *Critical and Constructive Aspects of Prof. R. D. Ranade's Philosophy*, brings out this point clearly:

Advaita-bhakti is regarded as a contradiction in terms.

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But confirmed monists like Madhusudana Sarasvati have shown that *Advaita-bhakti* far from being contradictory is a truism. We start with *bhakti* and end in unitive experience. In the very concept of *Advaita-bhakti* there is a reconciliation between absolutism (*Advaita*) and ethical and spiritual discipline (*bhakti*). Moral preparation and one-pointed contemplation or devout meditation are necessary, but the end is *Advaita-bhakti* which is the "unique power of soul which unites man with God...in which the union of man with God fulfills itself."

R. D. Ranade, commenting on the passage in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (III, 10. 5-6) in his renowned work, *The Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy* (p. 257), mentions:

When he (the mystic) had transcended the limitations of his earthly, etheric, mental, intellective and beatific sheaths, he sat in utter silence of solipsistic solitude, singing the song of universal unity. 'How wonderful, how wonderful, how wonderful; I am the food, I am the food; I am the food; I am the food-eater, I am the food-eater, I am the food-eater; I am the maker of this unity, I am the maker of this unity, I am the maker of this Unity,' which utterances only mean, metaphysically, that he was himself all matter and all spirit as well as the connecting link between them both, and epistemologically, that he was himself the subject-world and the object-world as well as the entire subject-object relation — a stage of spiritual experience which has been well characterised by a modern idealist thinker as a stage where the difference between the field, the fighter, and the strife vanishes altogether — the culmination of the unitive song being couched in terms which are only too reminiscent of like mystic utterences from other lands, 'I am the first-lover of the Law, I am older than the Gods, I am the navel of immortality; he that gives me, keeps me; him, who eats all food, I eat as food, I envelope the whole universe with splendour as of sun.'

Śaṅkara, the votary of Advaita, was not antagonistic to *bhakti*. He was the author of innumerable *stotras* and the *jñāna* of Śaṅkara was not a cold study of books, but a warm-hearted striving to realize the truth which, when turned towards a personal deity, becomes *bhakti*. In the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, (31) he asserts:

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mokṣakāraṇasāmagryāṁ bhaktireva garīyasī
svasvarūpānusandhānam bhaktirityabhidhīyate.

It means: "Among other things conducive to liberation, devotion (*bhakti*) alone holds the supreme place. The seeking after one's real nature is designated as devotion." Further, in the penultimate stanza of the *Gaṅgāṣṭaka*, Śankara speaks of *Advaita-bhakti*:

"mātarjāhnavi! śambhusaṅgamilite! maulau nidhāyāñjaliṁ
tvattīre vapuṣo'vasānasamaye nārāyaṇāṅghridvayam
sānandaṁ smarato bhaviṣyati mama prāṇa-prayāṇotsave
bhūyad bhaktiravicyutā hariharādvaitātmikā śāśvatī."

It means: "Oh Mother, who always desires close company of Śiva, when shall I be blessed with that unswerving and eternal unitive devotion imbued with which I, when the hour of departure has drawn nigh, with hands raised on my head, sitting on thy sacred banks remember with great joy the feet of Nārāyaṇa and yield up the ghost which will indeed be a great festival?"

Rudolf Otto in his work, *Mysticism: East & West* (pp. 153-54) speaks of Śaṅkara's attitude towards *bhakti*:

> Śaṅkara himself, in the lower level, is a thorough-going theist and that with ardor and holy zeal. His theology is here almost identical with that of later Rāmānuja (outlined above) and his opposition to those who deny God and to their rival systems which oppose theism, is as great as that of his successor (Rāmānuja). Therefore, he takes it for granted that the man who is redeemed of God does not turn back, but on the path of gradual redemption finds its last in *Brahma-nirvāṇa*. This explains as we have noted above the curious elasticity of the borderline after entirely disappearing between higher and lower knowledge — a phenomenon which cannot be dismissed as merely "Indian synthetic thinking".

In his book, *Idea of the Holy*, Rudolf Otto talks of temple architecture[6] which infuses in our mind a feeling of the sublime and the consequent elimination of separate individuality or egoism. We become humble and feel that we are just dust and ashes before the monolithic structure. When the egoism is eliminated, there is unitive experience (*Advaita-bhakti*), and all differentiation vanishes.

There is one more point which is very pertinent. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18. 55) refers to *Advaita-bhakti*:

... sā parā jñānaniṣṭhā iti ucyate. sā iyaṁ jñānaniṣṭhā

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ārttādi-bhaktitraya apekṣayā parā caturthī bhaktiriti uktā tayā parayā bhaktyā bhagavantaṁ tattvataḥ abhijānāti, yadanantarameva īśvara-kṣetrajña-bheda-buddhiḥ aśeṣataḥ nivartate.

It means: "This *jñāna-niṣṭhā* (devotion to knowledge) is referred to as the supreme or fourth kind of devotion (*bhakti*) — supreme as compared with the remaining three kinds of devotion, with that of the distressed, etc. By this supreme devotion the aspirant knows the Lord as he is, and immediately afterwards all consciousness of difference between the *Īśvara* and the *kṣetrajña* disappears altogether. Thus there is no contradiction involved in the statement that 'by the devotion of knowledge (the aspirant knows) me'."

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (1. 12) also brings out the triune unity of *bhoktā* (the enjoyer), *bhogya* (the enjoyed) and *preritā* (the mover.) The individual soul (*jīvātman*), the world (*jagat*) and God (*Īśvara*) are all Brahman, thus pointing to the all-pervasive unity. Śaṅkara bases his monism on all such texts.

We would like further to point out that the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* have influenced the symbolism of the Kailāsa. In the *Gītā* (12.5) the *saguṇa upāsanā* is preferred to *avyakta upāsanā*, for the latter is very difficult (*kleśo'dhikatarasteṣām-avyaktāsakta-cetasām*). The *saguṇa* manifestation of the absolute Reality as enumerated in the *Vibhūti Yoga* (chapter Ten of the *Gītā*) attracted the *bhaktas* and in the Kailāsa temple, we find some of the *Vibhūtis* depicted in all their grandeur.

Among the *Vibhūtis* mentioned in the *Bhagavadgītā* Himalaya is mentioned as the foremost among the immovable objects (*sthāvarāṇāṁ himālayaḥ*) and Kailāsa stands for Himālaya being the most glorious peak of the mountain and the abode of Śiva. Prahlāda, the great devotee of Viṣṇu and the foremost among the *daityas* (*prahlādaścāsmi daityānām*) mentioned as a great *vibhūti* also finds prominent place, more than once, among the carvings in the great temple. Similarly, Jāhnavi, Kandarpa, Skanda, Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, the elephant Airāvata which are mentioned as *vibhūtis* are also carved in the body of the temple in the courtyard, and the temple in its entirety is as if *adhyātma-vidyā* incarnate.

It will be well worth pointing out that Śaṅkara dealt a death blow to the spread of Buddhism and both at Ellora and Dhamnar, the Brahmanical monolith is carved out at a time when the Buddhist activity, at both these places, had nearly came to a close.

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There are thirteen Buddhist caves at Ellora and nearly fourteen at Dhamnar, and the monolith carved at each of the two places marks the victory of Brahmanism over Buddhism or of *Advaita-bhakti* over *Śūnyavāda*.

The rock-cut monoliths at Dhamnar and Masasur were dedicated to Vaiṣṇava worship and belong to the *Nāgara* or *Indo-Aryan* order. Thus the three monoliths situated one each in the Deccan, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh signify the Pan-Indian impact of Śaṅkara's Advaita philosophy coupled with the *bhakti* ideal.

NOTES

1. The date of Śaṅkarācārya is still a matter of controversy among scholars. Many scholars tend to place him about a century earlier than the accepted date mentioned above. For a summary of the views regarding the date of Śaṅkarācārya please see Swami Prabhavananda's, article in *Spiritual Heritage of India*, pp. 279-280. Even granting that he lived a century earlier than the generally accepted date, the main thesis presented in this paper would not be affected.

2. The author has discussed the Symbolism of Kailāsa in his article published in *Ellora Caves, Sculptures and Architecture*, Edited by R. Parimoo, D. Kannel & S. Pannikar (pp. 230-254).

3. R.D. Ranade, *Jnanesvara Vachanamrta* (*Amritanubhava*), Marathi, p. 8.

Amṛtānubhava (Marathi), IX. 43:

"deva deula parivārū kīje korūnī ḍoṅgaru;
taisā bhaktīcā vyavahārū kā na vhāvā?"

4. Paithan in Aurangabad district was well known as Pratisthana, the capital of the Satavahanas. Later, it continued to be a great centre of brahmanical learning where Jñāneśvara went to meet the 'pandits' and seek their verdict on the question of his belonging to the brahmin caste as he was born after his father had abjured *sannyāsa* and become a *gṛhastha* and lived with his wife.

5. Vide Fleet, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XII, p. 156.

6. This point was brought out by B.R. Kulkarni in his communications to the author in reply to his query about Advaita. The author is grateful to him for this information.

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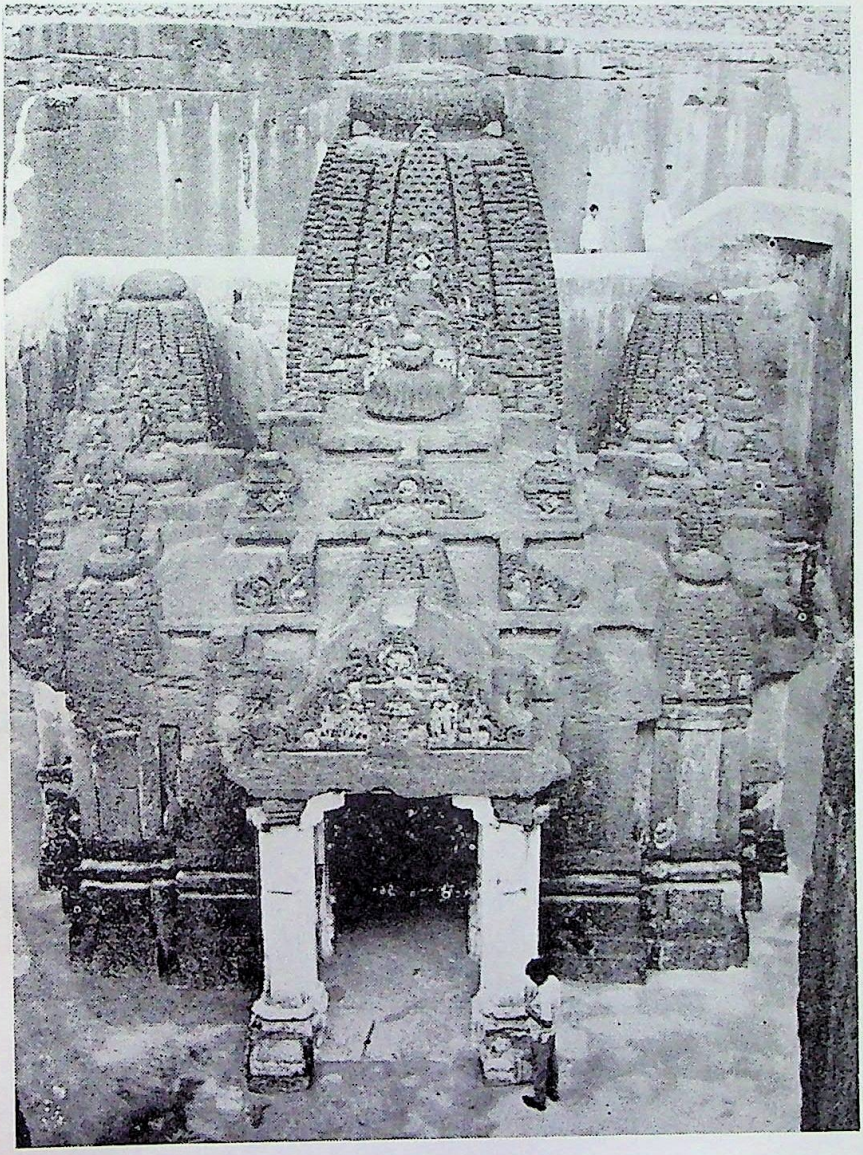

PLATE I

General view of the rock-cut temple at Dhamnar

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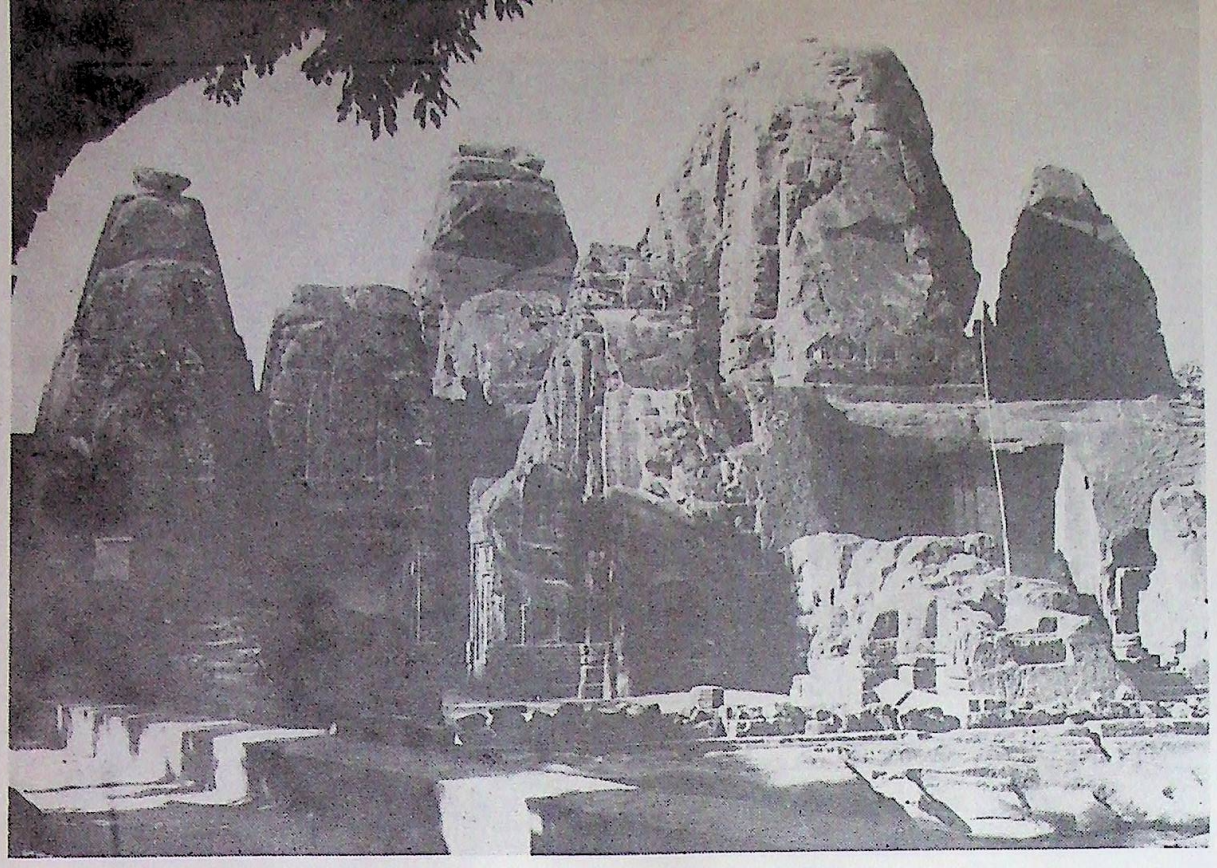

PLATE II

General view of the rock-cut temple at Masrur, Himachal Pradesh

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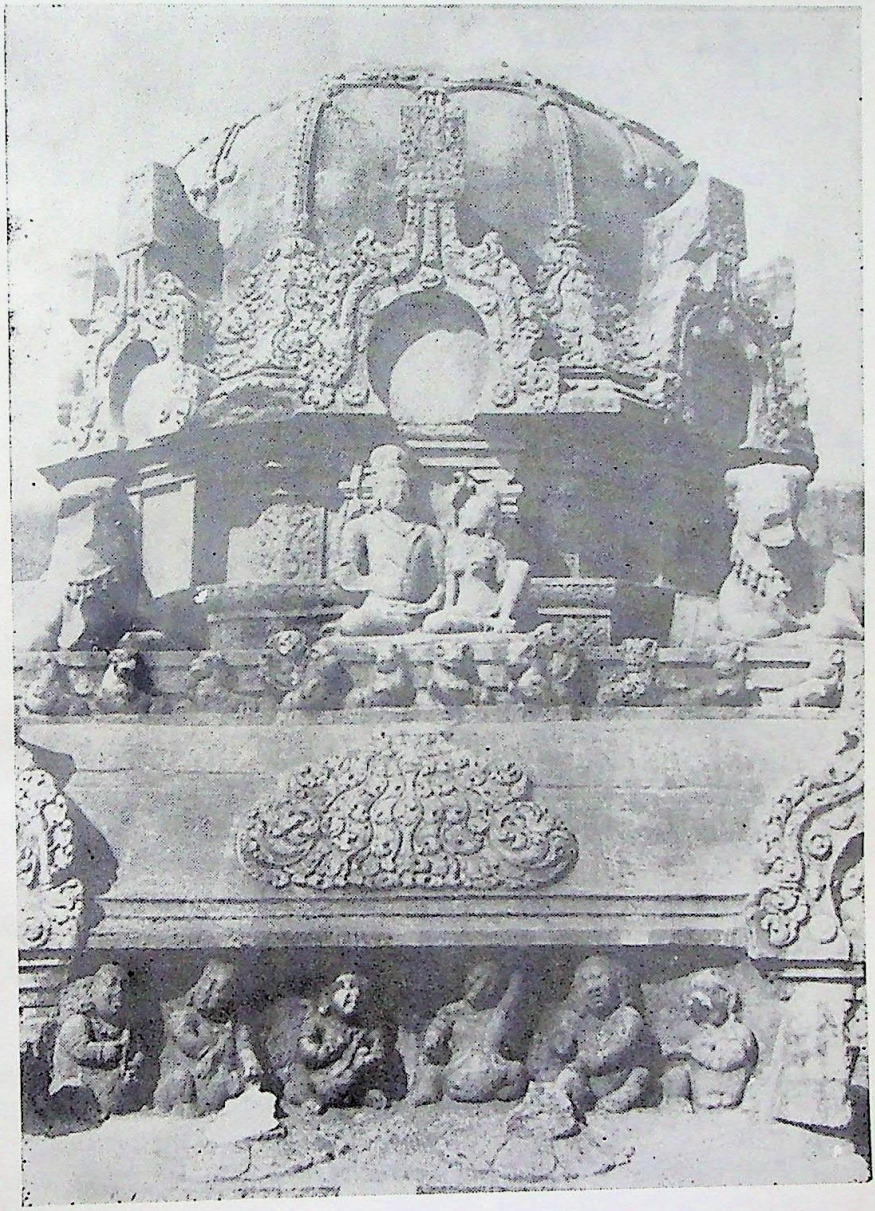

PLATE III

Rock-cut temple at Kaḷugumalai, Tamil Nadu

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38

AN AXIONOETIC APPROACH TO VEDĀNTIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

S. R. BHATT

I

Ever since the dawn of thought the Indian mind is distinguished for its natural inclination towards spiritualistic metaphysical reflections the culmination of which is reached in the Vedānta system. So much was the prominence attained by the Vedānta that many of the leading thinkers and social reformers of India took pride in being commentators or interpreters of Vedānta. Starting with different philosophical standpoints and presuppositions, they expounded the basic Vedāntic texts, known as *prasthānatraya*, in a coherent and systematic way claiming to satisfy the triple tests of *śruti* (scriptural support), *yukti* (logicality) and *anubhava* (experiential certainty). This gave rise to multiple shades of Vedāntic thought among which Śaṅkara's Advaita has been the most popular and ingenious exposition.

II

The most distinguisting feature of the Advaita Vedānta on its metaphysical side is the advocacy of the doctrine of one unitary pure consciousness as the ultimate reality of all existence. The entire universe of animate and inanimate objects is a transient mode of the eternal, immutable and perfect Absolute, named Brahman. The most important implication of such a position with regard to the nature and destiny of all existence in general and that of human being in particular, is that the *summum bonum* of all existence is to realise the state of perfection which is the same as being Brahman. We may name this goal as 'Brahmanisation'. The main objective of this paper is to expound this goal of Brahmanisation and to outline the Advaita Vedāntic theory of education as the appropriate mode of all value-pursuits, spiritual endeavour and spiritual realisation.

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III

Philosophy is both theoretical knowledge of the nature of life and reality and the practical knowledge of the principles of actions for the guidance of life. Human life being the most significant facet of reality, it is one of the basic tasks of philosophy to reflect upon human life and existence. Education is a deliberate and conscious process aiming at modification in the natural development of man tending towards more and more perfection. Since education is an instrument for the betterment of human life, all educational issues in their ultimate analysis rest on the philosophy of life. Advaita Vedānta has given us an axionoetic approach to life and reality and it shall be our endeavour to delineate the same.

IV

The quest after values and the attainment thereof constitute the very core of human life. There is an innate necessity in man (and in fact in all reality) to participate in the process of value-realisation. That is why, consciously or unconsciously, value-concepts, value-discriminations and value-judgements feature prominently in his life.

The process of value-realisation is basically an educational one. There is an educational dimension indigenous to axiology, and reciprocally there is a necessary connection between educational objectives and value-seeking. Education must have some objectives if it is to be effective and of any worth. It tends to refer to a set of values or ideals embodied and expressed in the objectives for which knowledge, skill, etc. are imparted. It is quite natural, therefore, to ask: "What is it that education seeks to accomplish?" A consideration of this problem necessitates value-thinking, for it is value-decisions alone which can provide valid and adequate objectives.

V

Once we have grasped the fact that the nature of man, and therefore of his education, is such as to urge him to participate in the fulness of life, to be receptive of the significant, and to lie open to whatever has meaning and value, then the question arises as to how we know what is valuable in life and in the world. The Vedāntic thinkers emphasise that value and knowledge are one in the ultimate existence. Though values are not knowledge in the ratiocinative form of knowledge, a knowing of higher sort belongs to them.

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VI

The Vedāntic thinkers find an abiding and enduring place for values in the very heart of reality. The essentially valuational character of reality is quite evident from the Upaniṣadic description of Brahman as *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. It is in *ānanda* (which may be translated as value) that there is the culmination of all *sat* (existence) and *cit* (knowledge). Any acceptance of *sat* and *cit* devoid of *ānanda* (value) dimension is bound to be deficient. So much is the reality tending towards values that the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes Brahman as "Bliss indeed is Its nature" (*raso vai saḥ*). It goes to the extent of saying: "Who indeed could live, who could breathe, should not this *ānanda* be in the supreme space?" The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* is much more emphatic when it declares, "*Ānanda* is the beginning and the end of the world, the cause as well as the effect, the root as well as the shoot." The whole world would not have been a place worth living, if there were no values to be realised in the world.

On the basis of scriptural testimony as well as intuitional realisation the claim of value upon existence is always upheld by the Vedāntic thinkers. It was, however, emphasised that the fullest expression and the highest fruition of value realisation is found in Brahman only which is an index of perfection or fulness (*yo vai bhūmā tatsukham*). This precisely is the purport of the *Ānanda-vallī* section of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.

VII

In the human beings, because of their limitations and finitude, the values are only partially reflected. But every individual, in the ultimate analysis, is one with Brahman, which means he has the potentialities for growth and perfection. In fact, the very word 'Brahman' stands for growth and perfection. So the ultimate goal of every individual should be the fullest efflorescence of the value-essence lying dormant or hidden in him. In the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā* there is a very suggestive description of a tree with roots upward and shoots downward. This suggests that our growth is rooted in, and nourished from, above. It is this Brahmanisation, *i.e.*, perfection by 'growth' which is the real meaning of *mokṣa* or self-realisation. It should be made clear that this realisation is not regarded as a mere utopian dream because it is firmly believed that every individual being has descended from perfection and has a natural claim to be back at perfection. This is one of the implications of the famous scriptural saying,

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"*om pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpurṇamudacyate.*
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate."

From the above analysis we can derive a conclusion which is of great importance to the educational context. It is that values are realisable and therefore they ought to be realised. For Brahman values are in existence, but for a human being who is 'Brahman in the making' they are yet to be realised. They are attainable through proper endeavour, and that is why they are called *puruṣārthas*. This value-realisation is a spiritual necessity. But it is not possible unless and until all the obstacles in the process of growth and fulness are removed. Here comes the role of education which is recognised to be the only mode of planned development.

VIII

The Vedāntic thinkers put forth a two-fold classification of values to be pursued by a human being. On this pattern all values of life, and therefore of education, can be brought under two heads, *viz.*, *preyas* (material well-being) and *śreyas* (spiritual perfection). Though these two types of values refer to two different orders of being, there is no incompatibility between the two. There is no schism in the two orders of being and hence there is no bifurcation between matter and spirit. Therefore they do not admit of any exclusiveness of 'either-or' position. *Preyas* provides the material basis, *śreyas* constitutes the spiritual summit of the same process of Brahmanisation or perfection. That is why in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* the preceptor in his final instructions exhorts the pupils as "*kuśalānna pramaditavyam*; *bhūtyai na pramaditavyam*" "Do not detract from material well-being. Do not detract from material prosperity"). Since matter provides the arena for self-realisation, *preyas* has the natural claim to be first catered to.

But one should not remain entangled with *preyas* for ever. After the necessary gratification of *preyas* one should make a passage towards the realisation of *śreyas*. However, it should be gradual and not sudden. Another thing to be remembered is that all the demands of matter do not constitute *preyas* and hence are not to be gratified. Only those demands are to be regarded as *preyas* which are not incompatible with *śreyas*, which is a higher value.

Preyas, thus, is the proximate value, and *śreyas* is the absolute and ultimate value. So far as *śreyas* is concerned, it is above the interest, motive or happiness of the seeker. It does not go against

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the true interests of the seeker. But the *preyas* or the proximate values, being based on the empirical nature of the individual, differ from individual to individual, because of their differences in *guṇas* and consequently *svabhāvas*. That is why the ancient thinkers formulated the four-fold classification of the society. In order that there may be a conscious, well-organised and balanced pursuit of both *preyas* and *śreyas*, they established the *āśrama-vyavasthā*. The word *āśrama* is suggestive of the points of beginning and stoppage. First of all, the individual must be made aware of his *preyas* and *śreyas*. Then he should be taught first to realise *preyas* upto a certain extent of his life and then to turn towards the realisation of *śreyas*. He should also be taught that he himself is a whole, but he belongs to a still larger whole. Therefore, there should not be any occasion for the collision of his *preyas* with the *preyas* of the society. That is why through various similes like the '*puruṣayajña*' in the *Ṛgveda* or the '*virāṭ-puruṣa*' in the *Gītā*, he is reminded of the basic unity of the mankind. Right from the very beginning of his pupil-hood he is initiated into community life, as is clear from the following prayer, "*om saha nāvavatu, saha nau bhunaktu, saha vīryaṁ karavāvahai, tejasvināvadhītamastu, mā vidviṣāvahai*," etc.

In the foregoing account we have seen that the individual is in the process of growth towards perfection, which we have termed Brahmanisation. This Brahmanisation consists in a balanced realisation of *preyas* and *śreyas*. The possibilities or potentialities for perfection are there in him; and what is needed is their evolution or fructification through purification. This fact is beautifully illustrated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* with the example of a small seed which contains within itself the possibilities of turning out into a big tree.

IX

We have fixed up self-realisation as the goal of life and of education. But how to achieve it? Or, what are the different steps in the process of its realisation? For this, we should explicate the meaning of the word 'self'. The Upaniṣadic thinkers use the word 'self' in a very wide sense. In encompasses the entire human nature and extends to the entire cosmos. They firmly believe in the fundamental unity of the microcosm and the macrocosm. They analyse the human nature into five aspects, one overlapping the other in succession. They name them as sheaths. They are as follows: *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya* and *ānanda-*

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maya. The same aspects are there in Brahman and in the outer cosmos as well. That is why, the *Upaniṣads* declare, "*annaṁ vai brahma*," "*prāṇo vai brahma*," etc. Though these aspects are present in Brahman in their fullest, for Brahman is fulness, they are not so in the individual, and are to be developed. An all-round development of man means fullest development of all these aspects in proper proportion. These aspects do not exist in a juxtapository order, but in a hierarchical order. Therefore, the process of realisation should start from that which is the lowest and should culminate in that which is the highest. Since bodily aspect comes first, it should be first developed. But one should not feel contented with the development of the body only. After its necessary development it has got to be transcended to the higher one, and so on. It should be made clear that in this transcendence from lower to higher, the lower is not negated or annihilated by the higher, but is absorbed by it. Each higher principle is more inclusive and comprehensive than the lower, and in the realisation of the higher the lower *ipso facto* gets realised. The lower takes its proportionate place in a pattern of living in which the higher gives the general direction of emphasis. Thus the *ānandamaya-kośa* which is the highest *kośa* is the most comprehensive and includes all within its fold. That alone is the real self and all others are only partial appearances of the self. When we speak of self-realisation, we mean the realisation of this total self.

Of these five *kośas* the first two pertain to the level of gross existence, and are associated with the gross body and the waking state. They may be referred to as *sat*. The next two belong to the level of subtle existence or knowledge and are associated with subtle and causal body, and with dream state and deep sleep state. They may be referred to as *cit*. The last one, *i.e.*, *ānandamaya-kośa* is the real self which is residing in all the bodies and which is realised in the transcendental state. This may be referred to as *ānanda*. A proper and full development of all the aspects of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* is the overall goal of a human being. There is another concept which also suggests the same. The realisation of the over-all self is viewed as the foremost duty and obligation. We have sparked off from Brahman and owe a debt to it. This debt has three aspects, *viz.*, to *pitṛ*, to *guru* and to *deva*. The *pitṛ-ṛṇa* obliges us to develop the first two *kośas*, the *guru-ṛṇa* demands the perfection of the next two *kośas*, and the *deva-ṛṇa* urges for the realisation of the last *kośa*.

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The above account may be regarded as a fair reconstruction of the Upaniṣadic order of being and value. This account has a great educational significance for us to-day. The doctrine of the *pañca-kośa* tells us that the value of education lies in training and exercising the five *kośas* in such a way as to make them a fit instrument for a good life which consists in fulness and perfection. It further tells us that in the process of value-realisation which is nothing but self-realisation, proper balance should be maintained to avoid the dangers of lop-sided development. The correlation between *preyas* and *śreyas* reminds us that there is no antagonism between body and spirit, that body is the 'vale of soul-making,' and that there is nothing unnatural in spiritual attainments being realised in a natural order. These two accounts along with the Upaniṣadic classification of knowledge as *aparā* and *parā* inculcate on us that our curriculum must be so framed as to do justice to all the orders of our being and value. The *Īśopaniṣad* strongly advocates the complementary nature of the lower knowledge of the physical and social sciences and the higher knowledge of the spirit. The knowledge of physical sciences and technology, which deals with *annamaya* and *prāṇamaya* aspects, is quite basic and must be imparted. But that is not enough. For providing a balanced and perfect education the role of social sciences, philosophy, etc. which deal with *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* aspects, and of the humanities which deal with the *ānandamaya* aspect, cannot be denied or under-estimated. Such a balancing approach towards curriculum alone can give a proper representation to the different facets or dimensions of human personality.

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39

WHAT WE OWE TO ŚAṄKARA

K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

I

Śrī Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkarācārya has a very important place in the cultural history of our country and the spiritual life of our nation. All those who cherish Indian thought and tradition are gratified that during this year our Government are organizing a *mahotsava* of his Jayantī. For this to the Government, especially to the Prime Minister and Minister of Human Resource Development, all of us, I am sure, would like to convey our felicitations and thanks.

Perhaps the earliest thinker to proclaim the integrity of India was Kauṭilya. This country is the land which extends north to south from the Himalayas to the sea and measures a thousand yojanas across and is the field of the cakravarti.[1] This idea never receded from Indian consciousness. It is reiterated often in the *Purāṇas*. Says the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: North of the sea stretching upto the Himalayas is the country that is Bhārata, and *all* its people are Bhāratiyas.[2] Aware of the essential unity and basic common culture of this great country, Śaṅkara was the first great thinker and spiritual leader to have made the whole of it his field of activity. Jawaharlal Nehru has, with remarkable insight, noted that "Śaṅkara wanted to add to this sense of national unity and common consciousness," "tried to bring about a greater unity of thought all over the country," and "left such an impress of his powerful mind and rich personality on India that it is very evident today."[3]

F. W. Thomas has divided "the history of Indian mentality" into three main periods: "1. The Vedic, or Aryān, period, which witnessed the creation of the Indian man. 2. The period of maturity and organization. 3 The post-Śaṅkara or Vedānta period."[4] According to him, 'the great success' which Śaṅkara's ideas achieved was due to 'their philosophic profundity', and 'the

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genius of their author' as well as to 'the very energetic personal propaganda' with which he is credited. While Thomas also mentions 'the political prestige' of South India in Śaṅkara's time as 'a subsidiary cause', he considers that the 'main factor' for their great success 'may have been the attention attracted afresh to the Upaniṣads themselves'. "The conditions under which the *advaita* of Śaṅkara triumphed," this Indologist comments, "suffices to prove that it did not flourish as a doctrine of pessimism, a consolation for political downfall or individual disappointment and lack of interest in life."[5] "The immense literature" to which Śaṅkara's philosophy gave birth and "the even more extensive literature" which it influenced, justifies the age that followed Śaṅkara being called the "Vedānta period". Thomas emphasizes two points: (1) "The fact that the Vedānta domination arose at a time of South Indian prosperity and prestige shows that it did not flourish as a consolatory or pessimistic faith, but as a triumph of thought." (2) Thereafter Vedānta was supreme and "much adored by all active religions," and its idea is implied in all subsequent literature.[6] He is right when he says its doctrine "is essentially a world idea, not linked to a particular people or to any theory of a divinely ordered state."[7]

The Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, writes Heinrich Zimmer, is "the typical and best-known philosophy of India;"[8] and, for A.L. Basham, it is "the standard philosophy of intellectual Hinduism to this day."[9] "It is," Nehru asserts, "this philosophy which represents the dominant philosophic outlook of Hinduism today."[10] This is borne out by the following facts.

The thought of Rammohan Roy who ushered in the modern epoch in India was firmly rooted in the Vedānta. For him Vedānta was the highest philosophical peak reached by Indian thought, and Vedānta as interpreted by "the celebrated Śaṅkarācārya" contained its authentic exposition. He abridged and rendered into Bengali and English Śāṅkara's commentaries on some *Upaniṣads* and *Brahmasūtras*. He sought to propound '*Vedāntapratipādya Dharma*', and wrote an "abridgement of the Vedānta or Vedāntasāra." Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the father of the Indian liberation movement, by his commentary on the *Gītā* made it *the* scripture of modern India, drawing forth from it an ethic and a social and political message, capable of rejuvenation of Hindu society. His metaphysics was that of Śaṅkara.[11] Vivekananda, who created "a sense of community among the Hindus," which in turn "gave

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Indian nationalism its dynamism and ultimately enabled it to weld at least the major part of India into one State,"[12] was an Advaita Vedāntin. On the basis of Advaita Vedānta he tried to develop a world-view in harmony with logic, experience and science. In his own way Ramatirtha attempted to develop Advaita Vedānta in a way relevant to the contemporary world. The essence of Vivekananda's message is that: (a) in all the millions of men, from the rajah to the labourer and the priest to the pariah, "God Liveth", and (b) the knowledge which delivers man from all fear and weakness is "the mighty Vedāntic *So-ham* (I AM HE)."[13] Rabindranath Tagore conceived of 'Advaitam' as an absolute unity of harmony and bliss, the Infinite One Who is Infinite Love, the Self Unborn beyond space, and yet this person, the real Man, Who is Brahman.[14] Mahatma Gandhi claimed to be an Advaitin, and many times spoke of the unity of life, and the soul being one in all.[15] Vinoba Bhave was much influenced by Advita Vedānta, and it was a passage in Śaṅkara's Upaniṣad Bhāṣya which led him to conceive of Bhudan and Sampattidan. Jawaharlnl Nehru's fascination for Advaita Vedānta and his plea that its outlook should influence our developmental process is well-known.[16] Vedānta did have some influence on Indira Gandhi's attitued to life, and she held that the colonial restrictions, feudal system and the old caste system were opposed to the "broader Vedāntic view."[17] Her greatest historical hero, she stated, was Śaṅkarācārya.[18] Thus a number of the leaders of our national liberation movement as well as some who shaped contemporary India owed much to the philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya.[19]

II

In the *Upaniṣads* we find that access to sublime saving knowledge is considered possible for all, including brahmanas and kshatriyas, young celibates, householders and old anchorites, sons of maid-servants with unidentifiable fathers, affluent shudra chiefs, and wanderers who had no occupation. One of the *Brahmasūtras* states that *all* men are entitled to Vedic sudy, implying that through it they may know the sublime saving truth, if they are ethically qualified — their marital status, occuption, etc., being immaterial for this.[20] Some great ancient Mīmāṁsā-Vedānta teachers (*e.g.* Bādari) mentioned in the *Sūtras* on Mīmāṁsā-Vedānta asserted the right of all, including shudras, even to Vedic rituals.[21] On the other hand, a number of *sūtras* reserved for the three upper classes the exclusive right to study the *Veda*, perform the rituals describ-

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ed in it and understand the highest truth conveyed in it.[22] Some *dharmaśāstras* and the *Brahmasūtras* laid down the necessity of going through all the life stages and performing rituals, before taking up the study of Vedānta and turning one's mind to final release.[23] So, according to orthodoxy, only the highly born who had a right to study the *Veda* could perform rituals prescribed in it and later acquire the sublime saving knowledge contained in it. Transcendental truth, it considered, is a monopoly of the higher castes.

In this matter Śaṅkara wrought a revolution. Vedic rituals are necessary, he said, only for those who sought their fruits, and those who had the desire and competence for them may perform them. Those who are not interested in obtaining the promised fruits of rituals may abandon them. It is sufficient if everyone discharges his duties and leads an ethical life; and one may give up duties too if one gets tired of them because of acquiring (a) discrimination between the eternal and the evanescent and (b) detachment from the worldly and other-worldly goods, (c) cultivation of sense-control, mental concentration, withdrawal from external objects, tolerance of suffering and misfortune, equipoise and faith, and (d) yearning for emancipation.* Such a one may utilise all his time in Vedāntic *cintanā*.[24] Chastity, *ahiṁsā*, *tapas*, speaking truth, sense control and mental concentration too, Śaṅkara argues, are actions; moreover, they are pure actions as are others like *dhyāna* and *dhāraṇā*: which can and ought to be practised by men of all castes and occupations, especially, as they are helpful for generation of saving knowledge. So, he concludes, all have a right to the highest knowledge: *ataḥ ... sarveṣāṁ cādhikāro vidyāyāṁ paraṁ ca śreyaḥ kevalāyā vidyāyā eveti siddham.*[25] Caste and occupation are not criteria for *Brahmavidyā*.

Śaṅkara himself did not go through the four life-stages; in his childhood itself he took *sannyāsa*. As a *sannyāsin*, in deference to his mother's wishes, he performed her funeral rites, defying śāstraic prohibitions. For going from the celibate state straight into the state of a recluse the authority of a very late *Upaniṣad* could be cited,[26] but for a recluse cremating his mother there is no śāstraic sanction. In this lies Śaṅkara's boldness in flouting irrational taboos and conventions, and his wisdom in giving importance to reason and humane values.

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* These four constitute *Sādhana-sampatti* (endowment of ethico-spiritual means).

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This may also be the place for giving some details about the traumatic but creatively transforming incident in his life mentioned in his biographies. In Kashi on an occasion while Śaṅkara, accompanied by his disciples, was going towards the Gaṅgā for a holy bath and prayers, he saw a *paraiah* with ferocious dogs coming across his path and shouted to him: Move away! Move away! But the *paraiah* replied:

> When hundreds of Upaniṣadic texts speak about the unique, pure, relationless, indivisible One Reality of the nature of truth, awareness and happiness (*satyabodhasukharūpamakhandam*), your imagining difference is surprising. Some wear dress of recluses and act like them; without any real knowledge they deceive householders. When you shouted "Move away," were you addressing the body or the self? All bodies are made of food, they are all material, and do not differ from one another. As for the inner witness Self, how is the consideration of its difference in a *paraiah* and a *brahmana* appropriate? As there is no difference in the sun's reflections in the divine *Gaṅgā* and toddy, so there is none among the One Self's reflections in various bodies. Neglecting the one perfect, eternal and bodiless Person in all the bodies, why this false apprehension, "I am a pure *brahman*, O Dog-eater, get away?"

Surprised and deeply shaken, Śaṅkara immediately recognised the truth of this and replied: "O you best among the embodied, you have but asserted what is Truth. So because of the words of you who are the knower of the Self, I am at once abandoning the notion 'this is an outcaste'."[27]

Śaṅkara at once broke forth into five verses, each ending with: "He who has such steadfast insight is my *guru*, whether he be an outcaste or a *brahmana*. This is my firm understanding." "caṇḍālo'stu sa tu dvijo'stu gururityeṣā *manīṣā mama*."[28]

The first verse, for example, says: "I am the Awareness (*saṁvit*) which clearly shines forth in waking, dream and witnesses the world, — and not the thing seen. He who has such steadfast insight is my *guru*..." The other verses reiterate the truth of unity in different ways. According to the story, while Śaṅkara was thus rhapsodising about Oneness, he was blessed with a vision of Śiva in the untouchable and his four dogs appeared to him as the four *Vedas*. Śaṅkara's encounter with the *caṇḍāla* must have

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been as 'creative' as the Maritzburg experience was for Mahatma Gandhi.

In his *bhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtra* which exclude shudras from access to the supreme liberating knowledge in the *Veda*, Śaṅkara cites the cases of Vidura and the righteous butcher of the *Mahābhārata* and explains: "As in them there was generation of sublime knowledge due to the impressions of their past actions (*pūrvakṛta-saṁskāra*), their attaining the fruit of it cannot be prohibited or prevented. Knowledge must culminate in its fruit. Further, according to the *smṛtis*, the four castes have a right of access to *Itihāsa-Purāṇas*; so through them they can attain the highest knowledge, but not through the *Veda*.[29] Such was Śaṅkara's conclusion which, in fact, makes the prohibition of Vedic study for shudras ridiculous, for they may get the very same knowledge from other sources!

Tradition has preserved an instance of Śaṅkara actually reducing this prohibition to absurdity. Once during his extensive travels through the country, in a village he came across an outcaste leper in a pitiable state, but with the *sādhana-sampatti* mentioned above. To free him from transmigration, tradition avers, Śaṅkara composed for him a *śloka* in the form of question and answer,[30] which was nothing but a faithful echo of Yājñavalkya-Janaka dialogue of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (IV.3.1.ff):

> What is your Light? The sun during the day and lamps, etc. during the night. Let it be so, but tell me what is the Light that beholds (cognises) the sun, moon etc. as shining? That is my eye. And, when it is closed, what beholds them? My mind (reason). What is it that beholds (cognises) your mind? "I". So, you are the supreme Light. That I Am, my Master.[31]

Hearing this the outcaste leper, according to tradition, forthwith became a *Brahmajñānī* (knower of the Absolute) and had a vision of Truth!

This was an ingenious way of circumventing superstitious orthodoxy. If one wishes to enlighten those whom orthodoxy does not permit to hear the holy texts, let one express their meaning in other words. A quiet peaceful revolution, indeed! No other great Vedāntic teacher of medieval India who commented on the *Brahmasūtra* showed such liberalism and humanism. Śaṅkara was, indeed, a most compassionate *Brahmajñānī* (*karuṇālaya*).

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III

Śaṅkara gave the greatest importance to self-effort and self-enquiry culminating in personal experience of Truth. One does need a *guru* to show one how to proceed on the path to the spiritual goal. As the *Upaniṣad* says, a man blindfolded and brought from Gāndhāra to a solitary place in, say, *madhya-deśa* and left there needs someone to free him and direct him as to how to go back to his own place; and then going from village to village in due course he reaches his destination. In the same way, the passage says, one who has an *ācārya* knows the Real (*ācāryavān puruṣo veda*).[32] But Śaṅkara enjoins that one should not rest content forever relying on what the teacher taught; the nature of the Real must be known by oneself very clearly and directly (*vastusvarūpaṁ sphuṭabodhacakṣuṣā svenaiva vedyaṁ na tu paṇḍiteṇa*).[33] Moreover, a true teacher, according to him, "creates in the disciple his own sameness" (*i.e.* makes him exactly equal to himself) [34] Śaṅkara emphasizes that without enquiry, by no other means (such as rituals or worship) will knowledge be generated (*notpadyate vinā jñānaṁ vicāreṇa anyasādhanaiḥ*).[35] Intense intellectual effort preceded by rigorous moral discipline resulting in the purification of the mind is indispensable for direct Advaitic knowledge.

Anubhava or integral experience in which Brahman is known as one's self is, in other words, the realisation of oneself as Brahman. The means for this is the 'hearing' of the Upaniṣadic *mahāvākya*. As soon as an individual self knows that he is in fact Brahman, he becomes Brahman, and such realisation is *anubhava*; that is liberation itself. Just as a prince kidnapped by robbers in his childhood does not know that he is a prince, but realises himself to be a prince as soon as he is told, an individual realizes himself to be Brahman as soon as he hearkens to the *mahāvākya*. Whether a man has knowledge of Brahman is to be judged by his own heart's conviction alone (*svahṛdayapratyayam brahmavedanam*). *Anubhava* is the assured conviction, the clear undoubted awareness that one is Brahman, generated by Vedāntic sentences (*vedapramāṇajanitabrahmāvagama*).[36]

There is no inferential proof for Brahman. Śaṅkara's school has criticized theological proofs, showing they cannot give any certain knowledge. But arguments showing the probability of Advaita being truth can be formulated, and arguments against it can be demolished. Sense-perception is impossible in the case of Brahman, nor can yogic intuition independently apprehend the

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oneness of the Self. Only the 'hearing' of Vedāntic sentences, meditation on them and contemplation of their meaning results in *sākṣātkāra* ('vision' of Brahman).[37] This is Śaṅkara's standpoint: "Only when scripture and rational arguments join together to throw light on the Oneness of the Self, they can show it as clearly as a bael fruit in one's palm" (*āgamopapattī hi ātmaikatvaprakāśanāya pravṛtte śaknutaḥ karatala-gata-bilvamiva darśayitum*).[38]

IV

Śaṅkara emphasizes that "even a hundred scriptural texts do not become valid if they say fire is cold or does not give light; for no one can cognise anything opposed to what is seen."[39] Advaita Vedānta is not opposed to empirical experience, history and science; nor does it need confirmation by them. Vedāntic sentences and one's own experience: these only are the *pramāṇas* for the truth of Advaita (*antassiddhau svānubhūtiḥ pramāṇam*).[40]

As the *Gītā* points out, those for whom duality has been destroyed (*chinnadvaidhāḥ*) and who have been equal-minded (*samabuddhayaḥ*), will be engaged in the welfare of the world.[41] The great men who have won peace, says Śaṅkara, work for the world's welfare (*śāntā mahānto... lokahitaṁ carantaḥ*). Humility and non-hatred constitute the very nature of a Brahmajñānī, who would be an ethical personality of a high order.[42]

According to Erwin Schordinger, the Upaniṣadic doctrine of Identity has an ethical dimension, that of equality. It provides, he thought, the only adequate and satisfying basis for an ethics of altruism and unselfishness.[43]

NOTES

1. deśaḥ pṛthvī, tasyāṁ himavatsamudrāntaram udīcyāt yojanasahasra-parimāṇaṁ tiryak cakravartikṣetram.
2. uttaram yatsamudrasya himādreścaiva gacchatām
   varṣaṁ tadbhāratam nāma bhāratī yatra santatiḥ.
   (II. 3.1.)
3. *Discovery of India*, pp. 190, 191.
4. *Indianism and Its Expansion*, Calcutta, 1942, p. 7.
5. *Op. cit.*, pp. 48-9.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 53 & 50.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
8. *Philosophies of India*, New York, 1953, p. 460.
9. *The Wonder That Was India*, London, 1985, p. 328.
10. *Loc. cit.*, p. 189.

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11. K. Satchidananda Murty, *Indian Philosophy since* 1498, Andhra University, Waltair, 1982, pp. 36-44.

12. K.M. Panikkar, quoted in Murty, op. cit., p. 39.

13. Quoting Aurobindo, S.M. Banerjee, *Vedānta as a Social Force*, Calcutta, 1972, pp. 46-47.

14. He quotes: para ākāśāt aja ātmā; tasmād vai vidvān puruṣamidam brahmeti manayati (*Religion of Man* etc.)

15. Murty, *loc. cit.*, p. 66.

16. "In considering these economic aspects of our problems,... perhaps we might also keep in view the old Vedantic ideal of the life force which is the inner base of everything that exists." Nehru, "The Basic Approach" in *The Economic Review*, quoted in *Imprint*, Vol. I, no. 7, Oct. 1961, Bombay.

17. N.S. Bose, *Indira Gandhi on Herself & Her Times*, Calcutta, 1987, pp. 54, 55.

18. In an interview to *Frankfurter Allegemine*: *The Hindu*, Hyderabad, Sunday, Nov. 4, 1984, p. 2.

19. In her important work, Dr. Hiltrud Rüstau (Humboldt University, Berlin, GDR) has maintained that among ancient Indian philosophical systems only Vedānta is alive; and has shown that all the Hindu thinkers of the Indian Freedom Movement were influenced by Vedānta, though each interpreted it selectively, determined by his political and ideological point of view. (Fourth World Sanskrit Conference of IASS. Weimar, 1979: *Summaries of Papers*, Berlin, 1979, pp. 104-5.)

20. *Brahmasūtra*, I. 3.25: hṛdyapekṣayā tu manuṣyādhikāratvāt. *Sūtra*, III, 4. 36-38.

21. *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, VI. 1.70: tasmāt sarvādhikāram syāt.

22. *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, VI. 1.25-28.

23. *Manusmṛti*, VI. 35-7. *Brahmasūtra*, III. 4.26, 32-4; IV. 1.16.

24. āsupteḥ āmṛteḥ kālaṁ nayed vedānta cintayā.

25. *Taittirīyopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, *Śikṣāvallī*, *anuvāka*, II. See also the passage: *brahmacaryaṁ satya-vadanaṁ śamo ... dhyāna-dhāraṇāni lakṣaṇāni*, *Ibid.*, III. 2.5.

26. yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajet.

27. For this whole episode: Mādhavāchārya, *Sri Shankara Vijaya*, with Dhanapati's Comm. (Telugu script), Madras, 1926, VI, 24-34. (pp. 138 ff.) If the female slaves of Maṇḍana Miśra in Māhiṣmati can converse with Śaṅkara in Sanskrit and the former's pet birds repeat śāstraic discussions, a wise *caṇḍāla* of

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Kāśī, the greatest seat of learning in those days, could have certainly reminded the Ācārya about the Advaita he professed. (*op. cit.*, p. 186).

28. *Manīṣāpañcakam* (with 2 comms.) in *Prakaraṇāṣṭakam* by Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda (ed. S. Subrahmanya Shastri), Varanasi, 1978, pp. 1-23.

29. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, I. 3. 9. 38: itihāsa-purāṇādhigame cāturvarṇyasya adhikārasmaraṇāt.

30. R. Thangaswami, *Advaita Vedānta Literature, A Bibliographical Survey*, Madras, 1980, p. 216. M. Venkatarama Shastri, *Vedānta Sarvasvamu* (Telugu), Hyderabad, 1981, pp. 103-105.

31. kiṁ jyotistava bhānumānahani me rātrau pradīpādikaṁ
syādevaṁ ravidīpa-darśanavidhau kiṁ jyotirākhyāhi me,
cakṣus-tasya nimīlanādisamaye kiṁ dhīrdhiyo darśane
kiṁ tatrāham ato bhavān paramakaṁ jyotistadasmi
prabho. —

Ekaśloka. On this there is a commentary by Svayamprakāśa Yati.

32. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI. 14. 1-2.

33. *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 54.

34. *Śataślokī*, 1: sadguruḥ svīyaśiṣye svīyaṁ sāmyaṁ vidhatte.

35. *Aparokṣānubhūti*, with Vidyāraṇya's comm., in *Prakaraṇāṣṭaka*, *op. cit.*, p. 7. Other means = karmopāsanalakṣaṇaiḥ: Vidyāraṇya.

36. For details regarding "*Anubhava*" and references: K. Satchidananda Murty, *Revelation & Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, Reprint, New Delhi, 1974, pp. 112 ff.

37 *Ibid.*, chapters on 'Yogic Intuition', 'Reason' & 'Reason & Scripture'.

38. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, III. 1.1

39. *Gītābhāṣya*, XVIII, 67. *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāṣya*, 1.4.10: na hi śrutiśatamapi śīto'agniraprakāśo veti bruvan prāmāṇyamupaiti; na ca dṛṣṭavirodhaḥ kenacid abhyupagamyate.

40. On this, see 'D' in K. Satchidananda Murty, *The Advaitic Notion*, Sringeri, 1985.

41. V. 25; XII. 4.

42. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, IV. 69, 62-7.

43. *My View of the World*, Cambridge, Mass., USA, 1964.

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40

ON THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ŚAṄKARA

G. C. PANDE

Professor Satchidananda Murty raised three important questions about Śaṅkarācārya, to which I propose to address myself briefly. These questions are — (1) Wherein lay the greatness of Śaṅkara? (2) What was the synthesis which he is said to have contributed to Indian culture and philosophy? (3) What is the philosophical methodology of Śaṅkara?

In seeking to discover the greatness of Śaṅkara we must not isolate him from his age. The historical individual is as inseparable from his society as the organism is from its environment. The work of Śaṅkara can only be understood in terms of the leading spiritual, intellectual and cultural trends of the 7th and 8th centuries in India. This period may be described as the transition from the Classical to the early Mediaeval Age. Buddhism was declining before the emergent Smārta-Paurāṇika religion which was catholic in the spiritual side, but increasingly rigid on the social side. *Bhakti* and *Tantra*, abstract logic and polemical metaphysics, syncretic ritual and social codes were developing side by side. Śaṅkara not only summed up his age but founded a tradition which continued to develop in the subsequent ages. He restored and renovated the Vedāntic tradition by absorbing the ideas of Gauḍapāda and combated those of *Mīmāṁsā* and *Sāṅkhya*. His strict monistic interpretation of *Vedānta* became the standing challenge for subsequent generations of *Ācāryas*. His concept of *upādhi-tāratamya* made it possible to accommodate the vast Purāṇic pantheon within the bounds of a strict monism. He held that no social eligibility was required for spiritual knowledge. Although Vedic study did require social eligibility, the lowest castes could also have access to spiritual truth through hearing non-revealed religious literature. Finally, Saṅkara's greatness lies in the still continuing influence which he has exercised

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on Indian thought and culture, in his classic formulation of *Vedānta* through his great commentaries and in his masterly expression of perennially relevant spiritual values.

In Śaṅkara we can discover a manifold synthesis. The Smārta-Paurāṇic tradition sought to synthesise *pravṛttidharma* and *nivṛttidharma*. Although Śaṅkara gave the highest position to *nivṛtti*, he admitted *pravṛtti* within the scope of Vedic *dharma*. The apparent distinction of *Nirguṇa-* and *Saguṇa-Brahman* provided the metaphysical basis for the twofold Vedic *dharma*. This synthesis also included the hierarchical synthesis of *karman* and *jñāna* within which *bhakti* was given an esteemed place. Another aspect of the synthesis which Śaṅkara achieved was the reconciliation of faith, reason and spiritual experience in the structure of *Vedānta*. The identity of the self and Brahman can only be known through revelation, but it can and must be personally experienced. Reasoning is needed to eradicate what has been described as *asambhāvanā* and *viparīta-bhāvanā*. It has also been argued by some scholars that Śaṅkara carried forward the synthesis which Gauḍapāda had formulated between some Mahāyānic and Upaniṣadic ideas, especially where illusionism and the distinction between *paramārtha* and *vyavahāra* were concerned.

A great difficulty in the proper assessment of Śaṅkara as a historical figure arises from the absence of any authentic biographical sources about him. The existing biographies all date from mediaeval times. It seems that the history of Śaṅkara was increasingly replaced by his legend. It is the legend of Śaṅkara as fostered by these mediaeval biographies which survives as the social and memory image of the great man.

One aspect of this legend needs to be specially mentioned and that relates to the tradition of Śaṅkara having founded the four great monasteries in the four corners of India. Satchidananda Murty had put me on to enquiring into the historicity of this tradition. I am afraid that despite searching into the records of Śaṅkara's age and adjacent centuries, I have not so far come across any evidence which would confirm the historicity of this tradition. There is evidence of Pāśupata-Śaiva *maṭhas* between the 6th and 10th centuries but not of any *maṭhas* which could be attributed to Śaṅkara or his school.

As for the methodology of Śaṅkara it may be said to reflect the inner structure of the Advaitic mode of self-enquiry. Beginning with faith in revelation it uses rational reflection not only to

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understand and interpret the revealed truth, but also to negate the instinctive and philosophical prejudices against it so that personal experience becomes possible. The analysis of self-awareness, distinguishing its indubitable reality from its spurious characterization, is an essential part of the process. The philosophical methodology of Śaṅkara may thus be said to be a combination of exegetical and dialectical reasoning within the context of a transcendental ontology which, as a whole, would express the second of the three steps in the Vedāntic search for truth. In the exegesis of Vedāntic texts apart from using traditional canons and method of interpretation, he relies on the concept of two truths or standpoints. In his independent exposition of Vedāntic principles or his criticism of rival philosophies he brings out the contradictions latent in empirical consciousness and existence. He appeals to two basic principles, *viz.*, that the subject can never be the object, and that the real cannot change or be sublated. Empirical consciousness and existence are shown to be false because they violate these principles. This transcendental falsity is, however, compatible with pragmatic validity so that the discovery of truth becomes a process of 'superimposition and negation'.

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41

A NOTE ON "ADVAITA AND ANNIHILATION"

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI

A dualist approached Śrī Ramaṇa Maharshi, our century's unique *jnānī* and bearer of the tradition of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, and expressed what he took to be the fundamental difference between Dvaita and Advaita in the following words: "We believe in the reality of God, world, and self; but you only believe in the reality of self." "Not at all," replied Śrī Ramaṇa, "We believe in the full reality of God, world, and self — all being self. You only believe in one-third reality of God, one-third reality of the world, and one-third reality of self." This is not merely a ploemically devastating reply, but an illumined mahāvākya which holds the key to an understanding of the temptation of annihilation which confronts humanity today and the secret of overcoming it.

Secular and religious dualism can both succeed in annihilating the adventure of life and civilisation on earth. If the world is other than self, other than you and I, other than humanity, then there can be no enduring renunciation of the desire to dominate it; and because such domination is impossible, there can be no security against the desire bloodymindedly to destroy all life and civilisation on earth. Likewise, if God is other than self, other than you and I, other than humanity, then there can be no enduring renunciation of religious dualism's desire to bring all humanity under the dominion of one conception or another of God; and because this is hardly possible, there can be no security against the desire bloodymindedly to wreck the game of life and spirit on earth and to seek a selective exodus to heaven. Fuelled by dualism, self-destructiveness may thus wear masks of secular and religious respectability and accomplish annihilation.

On the other hand, if all is self, as Advaita would have it, as Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Ramaṇa would have it, a salvational self-image becomes available to endangered humanity. I can see my self as all human beings; as all living beings; as all existing things;

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all that is: also as the nothingness which envelops and appears to threaten all existence. All manifestation, including nothingness, can be seen as the sport of self, the self-imaging of self-consciousness; and the task of existence as the essentially artistic commission to image *ātman* adequately in life and death, individually and collectively. Clearly, only ethically and ecologically sensitive modes of individual and collective living can manifest the joy and autonomy of *ātman*, the limitlessness of self. Overpopulation and consumerism, social injustice and dominion over non-human forms of life, cognitive invasiveness and technological manipulation of the elements of matter and life, all these aberrations of our age add up to a portrait not of *ātman's* autonomy but of the despairing violence of ego, individual and collective. To be rid of these aberrations wewill certainly need the imperatives of morality and the calculations of self-interest; but these may not prevail against the implicit destructiveness of secular as well as religious dualism which may come unexpectedly together in a nightmare compact of collective annihilation in the not too distant future. Only when the positive joy of adequate self-imaging establishes itself at the core of human motivation and consciousness can there be an enduring reversal of the annihilationism of our times. Allegedly world denying and God-denying Advaita is a life-line when supposedly world-affirming secularism and God-fearing religion covet bodies and souls and court catastrophe.

A final image. On the night when Śrī Ramaṇa Maharshi lay dying in his hut in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, his favourite white peacock perched himself on the roof of the sage's hut and screeched through the night. The last, or almost last, recorded words of Śrī Ramaṇa were: "Have you given that bird his dinner?" The peacock powerfully represents the delusion of finite individuality, ego, and the sky, the nothingness which the ego fears and succumbs to. The sage in the hut is incarnate self-realisation in the light of which the ego can see its finitude and the nothingness which envelops it as forms of manifestation of the self that it is, and become liberated at once from the fear and the lure of annihilation. The peacock has been given his dinner. We have been nourished by self-knowledge. There is hope, I think, for life.

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APPENDIX

IS THERE INDEPENDENCE OF SPIRIT IN THE PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT OF ĀCĀRYA ŚAṄKARA'S COMMENTATORS AND LATER FOLLOWERS ?

V. VENKATACHALAM

In this paper, I propose to examine a common charge, levelled against the commentators of Śaṅkarācārya and later writers on Advaita. The charge has a twofold aspect, and may be briefly stated as follows. (1) It is said that the age of the commentaries was an age of intellectual decadence and contributed little that could be called original. The very mental attitude of writing a commentary on an earlier work — however great the stature of the author — instead of producing an independent treatise, reflects a spirit of unhealthy submission, as opposed to one of challenging self-assertion, that is expected of an independent thinker.[1] (2) As for later writers on Śaṅkara's Advaita, they are mostly imitative or repetitive, even when their works partake of the nature of independent treatises. In fact, these so-called independent works are nothing more than echoes of the master's voice. As such, this class of later writings too reflects the same unfortunate bankruptcy in philosophical independence, that had taken hold of the writers, who came in the wake of Śaṅkarācārya. Two major factors appear to have contributed to such a situation in the post-Śaṅkara philosophical scene. First, Śaṅkarācārya trod like a colossus and took the whole country by storm with his overpowering intellectual dash and his smashing dialectical force, so much so that he became a centre of hero-worship, which persisted as an obsession among his followers for centuries. Secondly, with the recognition of Śaṅkarācārya as an incarnation of Śiva, the divine aureole got settled around his head, and thereafter his followers looked upon whatever he wrote as sacrosanct and accepted it all in the spirit of *ipse dixit*. This halo of divinity attached to his utterances must have certainly deadened the rational attitude of accepting nothing on faith or authority and also banged the doors on the intellectual independence of his followers, whatever remained of it.

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What I have stated above can be taken to be the *pūrva-pakṣa* of this paper. I shall now proceed to examine the validity or otherwise of this contention stated above and see how far and to what extent these and other similar arguments adduced to support it can stand the test of searching scrutiny. The area covered by the question posed here is so vast that it would be futile to attempt an exhaustive study. It is certainly not possible to consider even all the major commentators, nor, likewise, even all the outstanding followers of Śaṅkarācārya. The scrutiny has, therefore, to be highly selective. I shall confine myself to two commentators and two later followers, selected at random.

The first complete commentary on Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* was written by the versatile genius of Mithilā, Vācaspati Miśra. In the very opening benedictory verse,[2] Vācaspati Miśra has deftly indicated one of his important contributions to Śaṅkara's Advaita, when he speaks of Brahman as "*anirvācya-avidyādvitaya-saciva.*" The concept of two *avidyās* mentioned here is Vācaspati's own. Śaṅkara never speaks of two *avidyās*, though he does speak of two Brahmans, the higher and the lower, in the Kāryādhikaraṇa of his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya.*[3] Students of Vedānta are only too well aware of the many changes Vācaspati introduced in Śaṅkara's philosophical thought and was, on that account, stigmatized by Prakaṭārthakāra, an upholder of traditionalism, as having polluted Śaṅkara's system with Maṇḍana Miśra's thought (*vācaspatistu maṇḍanapṛṣṭha-sevī...*).[4]

That this concept of two *avidyās* is a departure made by Vācaspati from Śaṅkarācārya's Advaitic frame was clearly recognised by writers of earlier days. This is evident from the following declaration of Amalānanda in his commentary on the Devatādhikaraṇa section of the *Bhāmatī*:

bhramāt saṁskārataścānyā maṇḍūkamṛd-udāhṛteḥ
bhāvarūpā matā'vidyā sphuṭaṁ vācaspateriha.[5]

Here Amalānanda says that Vācaspati's view of avidyā as a positive entity, different from illusion and its saṁskāra, is evident from the comparison, he has instituted, of frogs in a pond being reduced to the form of mud in summer and re-emerging as frogs after the first fall of rains. In fact, Amalānanda was not slow to recognise Vācaspati's purpose in speaking of two *avidyās* in his opening verse and clarified it in his commentary there itself with the following note: "ekā avidyā anādir-bhāvarūpā daivatādhikaraṇe vakṣyate, anyā pūrva-pūrva-vibhrama-saṁskāraḥ, tadavidyā-

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dvitayam."[6]

This clearly shows two things. (1) Great commentators like Vācaspati Miśra did not hesitate to introduce changes in the thought of the works they commented upon. The fact that they wrote commentaries did not deter them from making their own original contributions to the system of thought, which they interpreted. (2) Writers like Amalānanda understood and recognised well this fact that all commentators were not blind followers of their originals.

One more point deserves special notice here. Vācaspati Miśra too had great admiration for Śaṅkara and did look upon his bhāṣya on the *Brahmasūtra* with a spirit of profound reverence, and his admiration does smack of blind hero-worship. This is evident from his own confession in the last of his prefatory verses to the *Bhāmati*[7] wherein he meekly declares that by writing a commentary on Śaṅkara's work, he has only glorified himself and that his commentary would get sanctified by association with the Ācārya's work even as the water of a street-drain would get purified by being linked with the holy Gangā. What is significant to note here is that even such a reverential attitude towards Śaṅkara did not deter Vācaspati Miśra from making necessary deviations from Śaṅkara's thought, when his reason dictated the need for such changes. It may look paradoxical but it is true that when it came to independence in thought, personal loyalties simply did not count.

When I say this, I am aware that this is not true of the common run of commentators. A large number of them did adopt an attitude of blind allegiance and would not dare to depart from the track set by their original authors. Even in the case of Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, commentaries like the *Ratnaprabhā*, the *Nyāyanirṇaya* and so forth belong to this class.

I shall now take up Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, another great commentator of Śaṅkara, who came many centuries after Vācaspati but presents a close parallel in both respects: that is to say, he had abounding reverence for Śaṅkara, on the one hand; but, on the other hand, he did not hesitate to make sweeping departures from his explanations and interpretations of scriptural texts and even his settled policies and conclusions while projecting Śaṅkara's Advaita Siddhānta in his own independent way. It is interesting to note that in this case too, his independence of spirit came up for carping criticism and scathing attacks from a professed loya-

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list, not much different from those that Vācaspati received from the author of *Prakaṭārtha-vivaraṇa.*

The commentator I speak of here is none other than Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, one of the greatest names, if not the greatest name, among later Advaitins and the commentary I speak of is his celebrated *Gūḍhārtha-dīpikā* on the *Bhagavad-gītā.* His spirit of infinite reverence for Ācārya Śaṅkara, which smacks of blind hero-worship, is evident in numerous places in the commentary. The following apologetic verse which he has suffixed to his explanation of "manaḥ saṁyamya maccitto yukta āsīta matparaḥ,"[8] should suffice as an illuminative sample:

vyākhyātṛtve'pi me nātra bhāṣyakāreṇa tulyatā
guñjāyāḥ kiṁ nu hemnaika-tulārohe'pi tulyatā.[9]

"I cannot dream of claiming parity with the Bhāṣyakāra, merely on the score that I am a commentator of the *Bhagavadgītā*, even as he was. Can the tiny *guñjā* seed (used by goldsmiths for weighing gold jewels, etc.) ever aspire for equality with gold, merely because it has mounted a pan of the same balance, like the gold on the other pan?"

Incidentally, it looks rather enigmatic that he should have chosen to write this adulatory verse closely after he wrote an explanation for a verse, where he refused to toe the *bhāṣya*-line, not after one where he glorified Śaṅkara's interpretation! Likewise, in the concluding chapter after the close of the message proper with the famous verse "sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja,"[10] Madhusūdana Sarasvatī gives an appraisal of the three *niṣṭhās — karmaniṣṭhā, jñānaniṣṭhā* and *bhaktiniṣṭhā* and affirms his view that *bhaktiniṣṭhā* is the means as well as the consummation of the other two — a view that is not only at variance with, but is diametrically opposed to, Śaṅkara's considered view of two *niṣṭhās — karma* and *jñāna* — and his view that the verse speaks of the culmination of *jñānaniṣṭhā* chastened by *karma-sannyāsa.* Here again, after having declared his difference in no uncertain terms, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī confesses with great modesty that he could be no match for the Bhāṣyakāra in divining the true intent of the Lord: "bhāṣyakṛtaste 'sarvadharmān parityajya' iti sarvakarma sannyāsānuvādena 'māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja' — iti jñānaniṣṭhopasaṁhṛtetyāhuḥ bhagavad-abhiprāyavarṇane ke vayaṁ varākāḥ."[11]

The fact of the matter is Madhusūdana Sarasvatī made bold departures from Ācārya Śaṅkara not only in interpreting the fun-

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damental doctrine of the *Bhagavadgītā* but also in his explanation of individual verses, even while conforming to Śaṅkara's in explaining a large majority of the verses. Such apparent dichotomy became possible only because of the clear split in his personality between the emotional and the intellectual. Emotionally he owed unquestioning allegiance to Ācārya Śaṅkara, but he did not allow this emotional loyalty to interfere with his intellectual independence as a philosopher, which he never hesitated to assert, whenever the intellect dictated a need for deviating from the *guru's* beaten track. A similar instance of such conflict between the philosopher and the devotee in Madhusūdana Sarasvatī is to be found in his *magnum opus*, the *Advaitasiddhi* too. While expounding his intellectual conviction in Nirguṇa Brahman and citing chapter and verse to prove it, this great master of Advaitic dialectic had no scruples of conscience in confessing his insatiable devotion for the *saguṇa* form of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Students of the *Advaitasiddhi* are well aware of the enigma he presented by prefixing one of the sections of the book,[12] dealing with the attributeless Brahman with his famous verse[13] glorifying Kṛṣṇa, in which he affirms that he (personally?) knew no truth greater than the supreme Kṛṣṇa.

This issue of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's independence of philosophical thought expressed through his *Gītā* exegesis can be approached from another angle also. We have another commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* styled *Bhāṣyotkarṣadīpikā*[14] by Dhanapati which emerged as a reaction to the commentaries of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and Śrīdharasvāmin. The author of this commentary looked upon himself as a stalwart votary of Śaṅkara and assumed the role of a crusader[15] for Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* and wrote this commentary to vindicate Śaṅkara's standpoint in all the numerous cases, where Madhusūdana Sarasvatī or Śrīdharasvāmin gave a different twist to the text. Even a cursory look at this loyalist commentary will show the extent to which Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has shown his originality in the *Gītā* exegesis. The editor[16] of the N.S.Press edition of the *Bhagavadgītā* with eight commentaries and sub-commentaries has taken pains to indicate in his foot-notes all those places of *Bhāṣyotkarṣadīpikā*, wherein its author has pulled up Madhusūdana Sarasvatī or Śrīdharasvāmin for differing from Śaṅkara.

In the context of the independence of thought of the commentators of Ācārya Śaṅkara, there is another basic circumstance

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which throws interesting light on this point. The very evolution of the two different *prasthānas* or philosophical schools, Vivaraṇa-prasthāna and Bhāmatī-prasthāna, within the fold of Śaṅkara's Advaita, rests purely on the commentaries and sub-commentaries on Ācārya Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. These two independent sub-schools of Advaita holding mutually divergent views on important philosophical issues were the off-shoots of the commentaries of Vācaspati, Amalānanda and Appaya Dīkṣita on the one hand, and of Padmapāda, Prakāśātman and Akhaṇḍānanda on the other. This holds a true measure of the philosophical independence of the authors of these commentaries and provides irrevocable evidence to conclude that the commentary form did not act as a bar to outstanding thinkers to give expression to their independence as philosophers.[17]

Though this tradition of writing commentaries on the works of others and even sub-commentaries on commentaries did not obstruct philosophical independence, this form was certainly a handicap to readers to isolate the independent contribution of the authors concerned from the intricate net of explanations and interpretations. This difficulty which was an inevitable concomitant of this form of writing, was recognised by Vidyāraṇya, who wrote his *Vivaraṇaprameya-saṅgraha* to compile and present a lucid analysis of the philosophical tenets of the Vivaraṇa school, as they emerged from the *Pañcapādikā* on the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, the *Vivaraṇa* on the *Pañcapādikā*, and the *Tattvadīpana* on the *Vivaraṇa*.

bhāṣya-ṭīkā-vivaraṇa-tannibandhanasaṅgrahaḥ
vyākhyānavyākhyeya-bhāvakleśa-hānāya racyate.[18]

Thus the composition of the *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha* provides another indirect proof of the fact that the authors of this commentary-chain held independent views on specific philosophical issues and these needed to be extricated from the mesh of the commentaries. Vidyāraṇya's work was only an answer to this need.

This much should suffice for the first part of my thesis in this paper that there was no dearth of independence of thought in the commentators of Ācārya Śaṅkara. I now take up the second part, which concerns the followers of Śaṅkarācārya, who came after these commentators and wrote separate treatises on different aspects of Śaṅkara's Advaita.

The *Iṣṭasiddhi* of Vimuktātman is one of the works of the post-Śaṅkara epoch and should have been composed between

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850 and 1050 A.D. according to its learned editor, Professor M. Hiriyanna. Regarding the contents of the work, Hiriyanna observes, "Though the theme is stated to be the whole of Advaita philosophy (*samasta-vedāntārtha-saṅgraha*), it is specially concerned with what may be described as its pivotal point — the doctrine of *māyā*. The exposition of this doctrine is so complete that the work may well be described as *anirvacanīya-sarvasva*, a name given to the later *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍakhādya* of the poet-philosopher, Śrīharṣa."[19]

Apart from flashes of originality in the dialectics, this classical treatise of Vimuktātman contains a highly instructive instance of his independence of spirit — the theory of Pañca-prakāra-avidyā-nivṛtti' as it came to be popularly known in later Advaitic literature. Discussing the nature of cessation of *avidyā* produced by *ātmajñāna*, Vimuktātman finds that it could not be categorised as *sat*, *asat*, *sadasat* or as *anirvacanīya* and resolves the tangle by postulating a fifth category, just on the analogy of the fourth category of *anirvacanīya* postulated by earlier Advaitins for *avidyā*. If *avidyā* called for and was provided with a new category, where is the harm, asks Vimuktātman, in accepting a new category for its negation too? In support, he cites the well-known maxim — "*yakṣānurūpo baliḥ*" — which literally means that the offering given to a Yakṣa has to be in accordance with the nature of the Yakṣa, or in other words that 'You have to feed a Yakṣa according to Yakṣan standards.'[20] What Vimuktātman means to say is this: when *avidyā* itself is a new category, it only stands to reason that its *nivṛtti* (removal) is also a new category, different from all previously known categories.

For a second instance of independence of thought among later followers of Ācārya Śaṅkara, we may as well turn to Vimuktātman's own disciple, Ānandabodha. In my opinion, the disciple outdid the *guru* in this respect. Discussing the same problem of the nature of *avidyānivṛtti* in the concluding section[21] of his *Nyāyamakaranda*, Ānandabodha expounds the theory 'Pañcaprakāra-avidyānivṛtti' as stated in his *guru's Iṣṭasiddhi*. After this, he takes up the two other alternatives proposed by Vimuktātman for explaining *avidyānivṛtti* and finds to his chagrin that one of these is quite untenable. This alternative which equates *avidyānivṛtti* with Ātman itself was expressed by Vimuktātman as follows :

ātmaivājñānahānirvā tadāpyātmaiva śiṣyate

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ātmanaivātmavattvācca mohasyāhessrajā yathā
mohābhāvo'pi cātmeti mohahānissadā na hi
ghaṭābhāvalayo mṛttu tathā'pi na sadaiva tau.
jahyād-avidyā'vidyātvaṁ vicāraṁ sahate yadi
nyāyāghātasahiṣṇutvaṁ-avidyālakṣaṇaṁ yataḥ.[22]

Here, Ānandabodha avers that if the negation of *avidyā* is equated with Ātman itself, it will be impossible to meet the twofold objection that in such a case, either the negation of *avidyā* will have to be admitted as eternal or Ātman will have to be admitted as having a beginning. Both these possibilities are ruled out. On account of this logical compulsion, Ānandabodha discards the equation of *avidyānivṛtti* with Ātman as untenable. When the opponent points out that his *guru's* words should be sufficient authority for him to uphold such a position, his bold reply is that the words of the *guru* are not mandatory scripture, which could be cited as independent authority. It was, after all, just another possible alternative conceived by his *guru* and if it was logically untenable, there was no harm in conceding that it was a lapse on the *guru's* part. The heavens will not fall by recognising it as such. To cite Ānandabodha's words:

atra kecit parihārālocanakātarāntaḥ karaṇāḥ paramātmaivāvidyānivṛttirityāhuḥ. udāharanti ca ācāryavacanam-ātmaivājñānahānirveti. na teṣāṁ-prāguktadoṣānnirmokṣaḥ. na cātmaiva ajñānahānirveti vaidikaṁ vacanaṁ yena tanmātrād arthasiddhiḥ. anāsthāvādastvayam, ācāryasyāpi skhalitam eva vā. ko doṣaḥ.[23]

These words, coming as they do from a sannyāsin steeped in the tradition of boundless gurubhakti which equates guru with God,[24] should be taken as the very climax of the independence of spirit that prevailed in the tradition of Advaitic teachers, where independence of philosophical spirit could go to this extent that a disciple could declare without compunction that the words of his guru were not sacrosanct and that they could be modified or even discarded, if the compulsions of logic demanded it. These words of Ānandabodha that the guru was not infallible and the guru's words were not inviolable could, in my opinion, be blazoned forth as a fine example of the independence of spirit that prevailed among later followers of Śaṅkarācārya. This said, the last word regarding independence of spirit in the Advaitic tradition has been said.

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NOTES

1. S. Suryanarayana Sastri refers to this kind of charge in the Introduction to his edition of the *Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha* of Appaya Dīkṣita as follows: "It is often said that the Hindu habit of writing commentaries and sub-commentaries ... has not been favourable to originality or the development of thought." Vol. I, Translation p. 5.

Vide also the following from S. N. Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, II, p. 81: "But many other persons were inspired by Śaṅkara's commentary and under the name of independent commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra* merely repeated what was contained in these."

2. "anirvācyāvidyā-dvitayasacivasya prabhavato
vivartā yasyaite viyadanila-tejo'bavanayaḥ
yataścābhūdviśvaṁ caramacaram-uccāvacam-idaṁ
namāmas tad-brahmāparimita sukhajñānam-amṛtam."

Brahmasūtraśāṅkarabhāṣya with *Ratnaprabhā*, *Bhāmatī* and *Nyāyanirṇaya*, p. 1 (NSP ed. 1934).

3. "kiṁ dve brahmaṇī, param-aparaṁ ceti? bāḍhaṃ dve, 'etadvai satyakāma! paramaparaṅ ca brahma yad-oṅkāraḥ' ityādidarśanāt" — *ibid.*, p. 889.

4. The athor of *Prakaṭārthavivaraṇa* has employed strong language in criticising Vācaspati in many places. This charge that he blindly followed Maṇḍana at the expense of Śaṅkara's views is levelled by him in his commentary on the *sūtra* "sahakāryantaravidhiḥ...' as follows:

"vācaspatistu maṇḍanapṛṣṭhasevī sūtra-bhāṣyārthānabhijñāḥ samanvayasūtre śravaṇādividhiṁ nirācacakṣe, atra tu tad-vidhimūrīcakre. aho batāsya pāṇḍityam! śravaṇādīnāñca sannyāsāśramadharmatvāt tadvidhiṁ nirākurvan sannyāsāśramameva dveṣṭi, vidhyabhāve ca atha śabdena sādhana-catuṣṭayasampannādhikārisūtraṇaṁ cānupapannam. tasmādvācaspatipratāpam-upekṣya yāvatsākṣātkāraṁ śravaṇādividhito'nuṣṭheyam."

Likewise, he jeers at Vācaspati for splitting the words as '*kuśa*' and '*ācchanda*' in the *sūtra* '*hānau tūpāyana*...' (3.3.26) and charges him with ignorance of the feminine usage of '*kuśā*' in *Veda* to refer to the sacrificial sticks used as counting aids.

"samidvāci kuśāśabdasya strīliṅgatvāparijñānāt 'chanda evācchandaḥ' iti padaṁ ciccheda vācaspatiḥ" — Vol. II, p. 856.

5. *Brahmasūtra-śāṅkarabhāṣya* with *Bhāmatī*, *Kalpataru* and *Parimala*, p. 333 (NSP. ed. 1917).

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6. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

7. "ācāryakṛtiniveśanamapyavadhūtaṁ vaco'smadādīnām rathyodakamiva gaṅgāpravāhapātaḥ pavitrayati"—*ibid.*, p. 4.

8. *Bhagavadgītā*, 6.14.

9. *Bhagavadgītā* with *Śāṅkarabhāṣya* and Ānandagiri's commentary on it, *Nīlakaṇṭhī*, *Gūḍhārthadīpikā* and its com. *Tattvāloka*, *Bhāṣyotkarṣadīpikā*, *Śrīdharī* and *Gītārthasaṅgraha*, p. 298 (NSP. ed., 1936).

10. *Bhagavadgītā*, 18.66.

11. *Bhagavadgītā* with eight commentaries (*vide* fn. 9 *supra*), p. 755.

12. The section (closely following the ones devoted to establish that Brahman is *nirguṇa* and *nirākāra*) in which he seeks to prove that Brahman is of the form of mere *jñāna* (experience), *ānanda* (bliss), etc. is entitled '*brahmaṇo jñānatvādyupapattiḥ*'. Significantly, Gauḍa Brahmānanda, the seasoned commentator on the *Advaitasiddhi* recognised this dichotomy and wrote: "...jīvanmukto'pyācāryaḥ pūrvasañcitabhajanavāsanayā śrīkṛṣṇaṁ stauti — *vaṁśītyādi*."

13. "vaṁsīvibhūṣitakarān-navanīradābhāt
pītāmbarād-aruṇabimbaphalādharoṣṭhāt
pūrṇendu-sundara-mukhād-aravindanetrāt
kṛṣṇātparaṁ kimapi tattvamahaṁ na jāne."

This is a favourite verse of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and is repeatedly used by him in his commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* also. (*vide* at the end of chapters 15 and 18).

This is not the solitary instance where Madhusūdana Sarasvatī succumbed to his emotional weakness for the alluring charms of Kṛṣṇa's form, shaking his intellectual conviction of an attributeless God. In the beginning of his commentary on the thirteenth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*, he declared openly that those who were able to see the effulgent Light of that Supreme Brahman without attributes or actions through steadfast practice of meditation were free to do so; but he, for one, would prefer to revel in that seductive Blue Light, which roamed before his mind's eye on the sandy banks of the Yamunā.

"dhyānābhyāsa-vaśīkṛtena manasā tannirguṇaṁ niṣkriyaṁ
jyotiḥ kiñcana yogino yadi paraṃ-paśyanti paśyantu te;
asmākaṁ tu tadeva locanacamatkārāya bhūyācciram
kālindīpulinodare kimapi yannīlaṁ maho dhāvati."

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14. This commentary is included in the NSP. edition of the *Bhagavadgītā*, cited in *note* 9 above.

15. *Cf.* the prefatory verses, 7 to 12, to the commentary, in which he sets out his object in writing a fresh commentary on the *Gītā*.

16. Wasudev Laxman Shastri Pansikar.

17. Appaya Dīkṣita speaks approvingly of this diversity of views of the writers who came in the wake of Ācārya Śaṅkara in the two introductory verses of his *Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha*. In the first verse, he compares the main advaitic thought-stream that emanated from the sacred lotus-face of Śaṅkarācārya to the holy Gaṅgā which emerged from the sacred lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu and says that even as the Gaṅgā acquired different forms on reaching different lands, the Advaita Siddhānta of Ācārya Śaṅkara also acquired newer and newer forms through its exposition by the numerous ācāryas who followed him. In the second verse, he says that thinkers of the past freely adopted different courses in projecting the Advaitic truth as they were particular only about the basic truth and cared little for the lesser truths related to empirical experience.

"adhigatabhidā pūrvācāryānupetya sahasradhā
saridiva mahībhedān samprāpya śauripadodgatā
jayati bhagavatpādaśrīmanmukhāmbujanirgatā
jananaharaṇī sūktir brahmādvayaikaparāyaṇā.
prācīnairvyavahārasiddhaviṣayeṣvātmaikyasiddhau paraṁ
saṁnahyadbhir-anādarāt saraṇayo nānāvidhā darśitāḥ."

18. *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha*, prefatory verse 2. This is the right reading of the verse, according to which the verse would refer to the *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, its commentary *Pañcapādikā* (referred to very frequently simply as *tīkā* by many writers), the next commentary *Vivaraṇa* and the commentary (or commentaries?) on *Vivaraṇa*. The Acyutagranthamālā edition (Kashi, Saṁvat 1996) somehow got a wrong reading. As a consequence, the Hindi translation of the verse in that edition, which strains the word *nibandhana* is also wrong.

19. pp. xiv-xv of his introduction.

20. pp. 85-86.

21. p. 352 *et seq* (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Nos. 38, 62, 87 & 117, Kashi, 1907).

22. *Iṣṭasiddhi*, p. 377.

23. *Nyāyamakaranda*, pp. 356-357.

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24. *Cf. Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 6.23:
"yasya deve parā bhaktiḥ yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite'kathitāḥ hyarthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ."

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The National Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, decided to organize *inter alia* an International Seminar on Śaṅkara in connection with the Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava. Fifty-three scholars from India and seven from abroad participated in the International Seminar on Śaṅkara held in New Delhi from 9th to 12th January 1989. This Commemoration Volume entitled *Perspectives of Śaṅkara* contains some of the papers presented in the International Seminar. It was released by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi at a special function held at Badrinath on 17th May 1989 in connection with the Śaṅkara Jayantī Mahotsava.

The papers included in this Volume highlight (1) Śaṅkara's formulation of Vedānta, (2) the Advaita of Śaṅkara vis-à-vis other philosophical systems, (3) the ethico-religious perspectives of Śaṅkara's philosophy, (4) the convergences of, and parallelisms between, Vedānta and modern science, and (5) the place of Śaṅkara in Indian history and culture.

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